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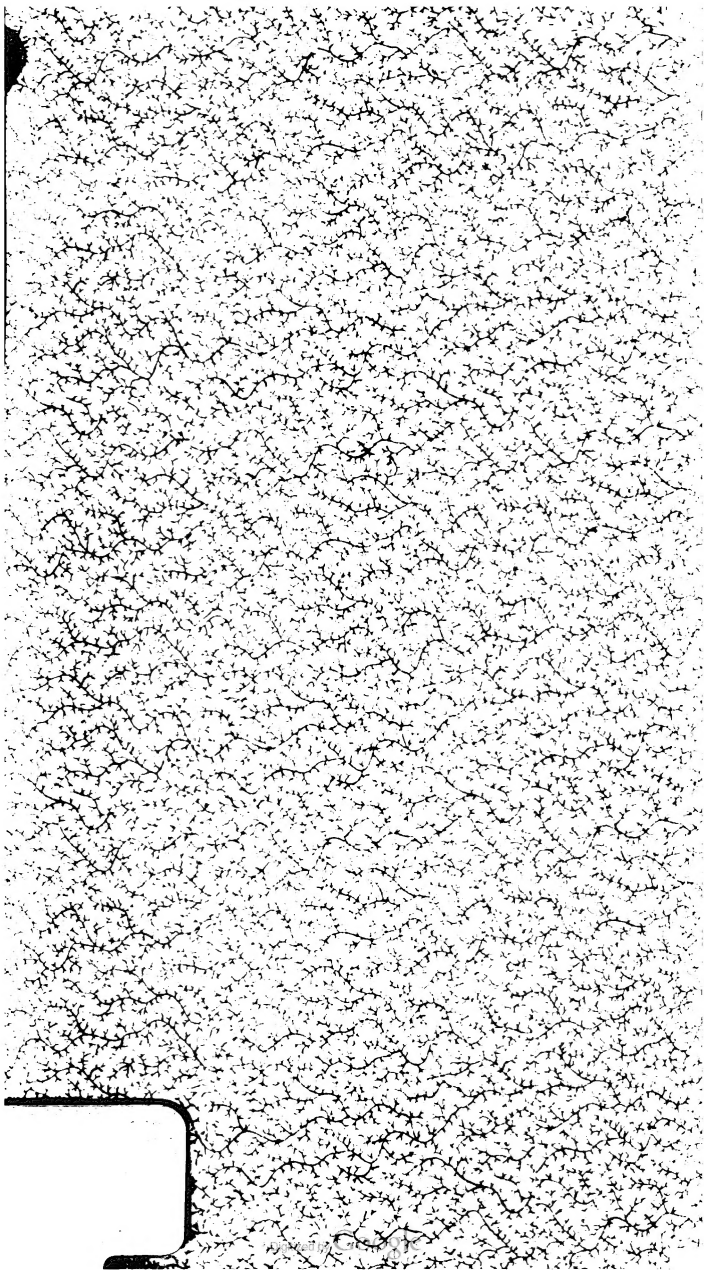
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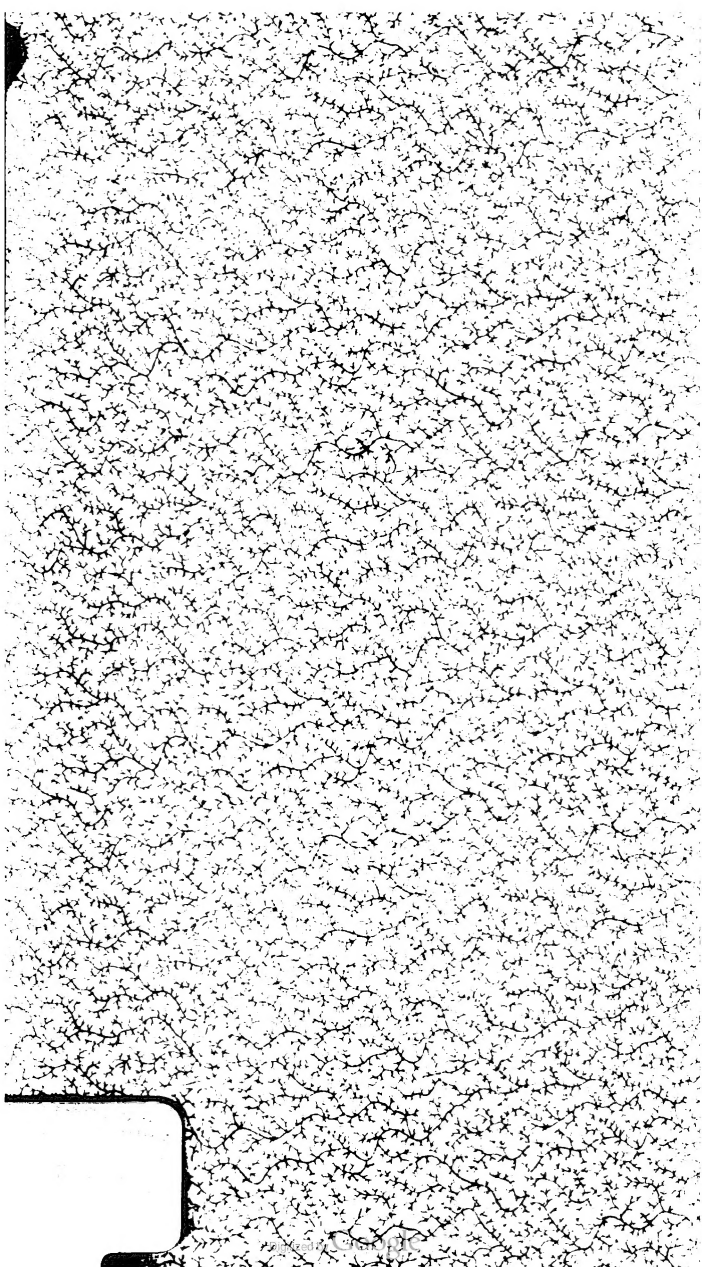
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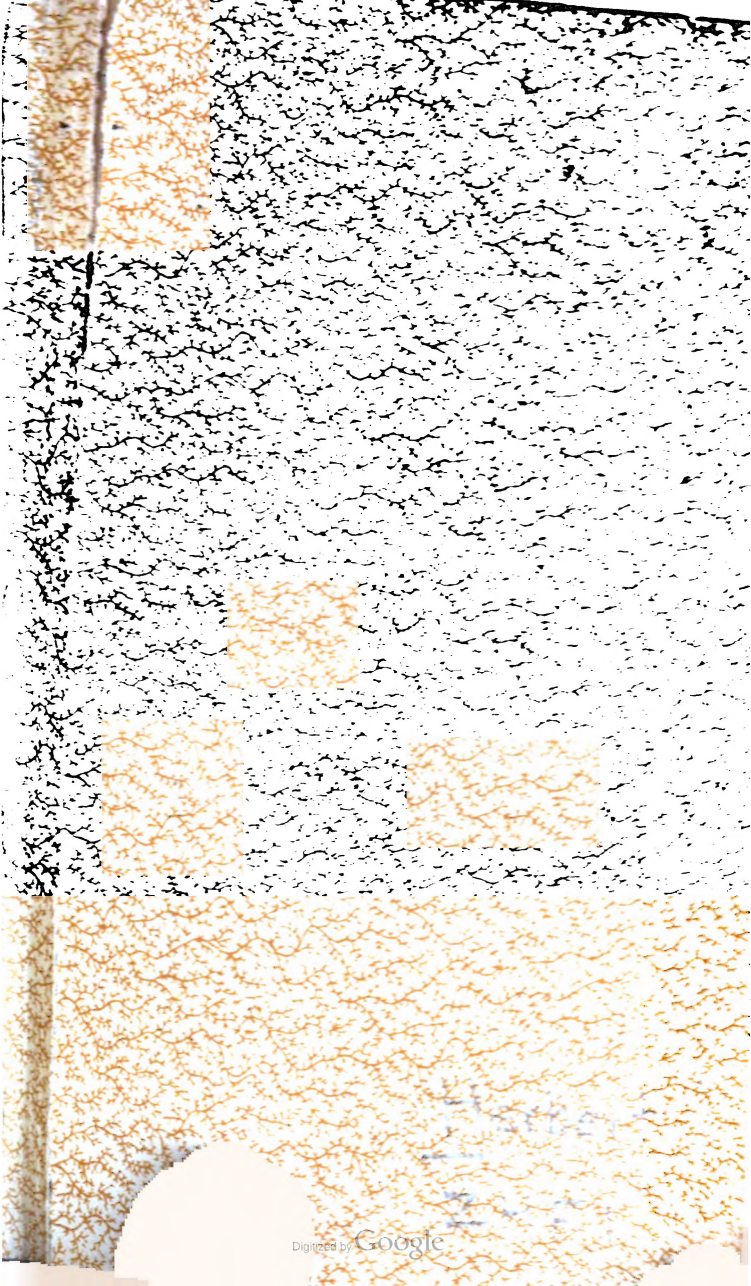


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SEVERAL EXCELLENT METHODS

O F

HEARING MASS,

With FRUIT and BENEFIT,

According to the Institution of that Divine Sacrifice,
and the Intention of our

Holy Mother the Church.

WITH MOTIVES

To induce all good Christians, particularly Religious Persons, to make Use of the same:

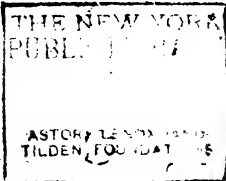
COLLECTED TOGETHER

By the Right Honourable

Lady LUCY HERBERT, of Powis,

Superior of the English Augustin Nuns.

PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1791.



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Motives proposed before each Mass will very much contribute to raise Esteem and Devotion in time of that August Sacrifice: therefore it is advisable and much recommended to all to allow so much time before Mass as to read the Motives which precede the Method you then intend to make use of: and also from time to time the Fruits which may be drawn from Holy Mass. page

M O T I V E S

AND METHODS

to assist devoutly at

H O L Y M A S S.

*General Motives to raise Esteem and Devotion
to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.*

THE most sublime action that the Church militant can offer to God, is that of the Holy Mass, because the victim offered to his Divine Majesty is of an infinite dignity: Christ therein receiving a new birth from the mouth of the Priest when he pronounces the sacramental words of Consecration, and dies again a mystical death. The Holy Ghost is the sacred fire which, by the victim then offered, sanctifies the Church, and all that assist at the Sacrifice as they ought.

Nothing ought to rejoice us so much as the advantage we have to assist daily at Holy Mass, in which we may enrich ourselves with the merits of Christ; nor can we do any action during our lives comparable

to that of every day offering to the eternal Father, by the hands of the Priest, the Sacrifice of the body and blood of his only Son.

All things are infinite in the Sacrifice of Holy Mass: the victim that is offered is infinite; the God to whom it is offered is infinite; Jesus Christ being the principal Priest and Sacrificer; Sacrificing himself in person, to his eternal Father, by the hands of the Priest. It is he who by his minister pronounces the Sacramental words which operate ~~this great mystery~~: Therefore one Mass, tho' celebrated by a wicked Priest, renders ~~more glory to God~~ than all the homages which Men and Angels can pay him.

God ordained the Holy Mass, in which the history of his passion and death is mysteriously acted as a real but unbloody representation of that bloody Sacrifice of his death, which was the greatest benefit God could give to man, or man receive from God, it being the highest expression his omnipotent love could make; which deserves not only all our love, but all we have or can have: and that this might make a deeper impression in our hearts and minds, he appointed this Divine Representation; to which we are invited as spectators, and ought to
come

come to it well furnished with love and compassion.

Holy Mass being the same Sacrifice that was offered upon Mount Calvary for our redemption, we ought to assist thereat with gratitude and love, with a reverential fear, and with an extreme devotion and attention, it containing the mysteries of our Saviour's death and passion, which we know was the greatest and most solemn action that ever was performed, when in the midst of the world and view of the people, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, suffered death, dying on a cross by the hands and for the Redemption of his creatures; a spectacle so full of dreadful Majesty, whether we consider the person, the end, or the manner, that it astonished the Angels, and was a spectacle worthy of God.

This holy Sacrifice being the representation of our Saviour's bitter death and passion, we are, as it were, indispensably obliged to apply ourselves to it, especially after the command that Christ gave, saying, *Do this in memory of me*: it is then his will that we should renew those dolorous mysteries, as it was for that end he instituted the sacrifice of Holy Mass.

This being, it seems, that though we may entertain our selves with other pious thoughts.

thoughts during the time of Mass, yet none but those of the Passion appear entirely conformable to the intention of Jesus Christ: And how can we, at Mass, behold Christ immolated, as truly as he was upon Mount Calvary, and his Precious Blood crying to us from the Altar, that he dies and is again sacrificed, and entertain any thought but of his infinite love which deprives him of his life?

To reap the full profit of this Divine Sacrifice, we must not only have an intention to hear Mass, but a formal application to what Christ does, who is our Head, and offers us his members in sacrifice. We do not hear Mass as we ought when we omit to unite ourselves with him. We should join with him by uniting our intentions with his, and by our application to what he therein does; the Sacrifice of Holy Mass being the mystery of our reconciliation and sanctification. Many souls that are now in hell might not have been there, if they had but once heard Mass as they ought to have done: for by means thereof they might have received such efficacious graces for their entire conversion, and such strength for to have withstood and overcome temptations, that they would never have come to that misfortune.

When

When we hear Mass, we should always reflect that Christ acts as Priest, and that the Priest is but his Minister.

2dly, That he is also the victim that is offered, as well as the Priest that offers it.

3dly, That it is for us he offers it ; so that we cannot do better in time of Mass than to keep ourselves united to him who is pleased to perform all our duties for us.

We must observe another thing when we hear Mass, which is to communicate spiritually when we are not allowed to do it sacramentally. And this practice is of so great value that it supplies for Sacramental Communion, and is as acceptable in the sight of God (who sees our heart and the desire we have to receive him) when, for just reasons, we cannot sacramentally do it : and these frequent Spiritual Communions will be a good preparation for Sacramental Communion.

The greater purity of soul we bring to Holy Mass, the more capable we are of sharing in the fruits of this adorable Sacrifice ; therefore we must first humble ourselves in the presence of God, and then, making an act of contrition, beg pardon for our sins. The following prayer may serve for that effect.

O My God, prostrate before your Divine Majesty, I acknowledge myself the most ungrateful and most unworthy of your creatures. I accuse myself before you and your Angels, of all the sins of my life past; of all my negligences in your service; of my neglects in complying with your blessed will and holy inspirations; of my sloth and tepidity in your service; and in the exercise of your Divine Love: in reparation of which, I offer you all the merits of Christ, who will soon render himself present for me upon the Altar. Receive, Lord, his death and passion in satisfaction, and for the remission of my sins; his indefatigable labours to repair my negligences; his prompt obedience in complying with all your wills to satisfy for my sloth therein. Look not on my unworthiness, but upon your Son, who, by an excess of goodness, gives himself to me to satisfy for all my debts. *Respice in Faciem Christi tui.*

A

A-METHOD OF
HEARING MASS,

*By considering it as a Representation of our
SAVIOUR'S Passion.*

WHEN the Priest comes to the Altar, represent to yourself how the Jews, after having taken our Saviour, loaded him with chains, and dragged him to Jerusalem, and from tribunal to tribunal.

Reflect a little, that had not love first captivated his heart, his enemies could never have bound him. Consider him as a victim going to be sacrificed for your salvation. Compassionate him in the affronts he suffers, and follow him in spirit with a resolution never more to forsake him.

O Charity ! how strong and powerful are your bonds, since they captivate a God ! O may they bind me so fast to him, that nothing may ever more separate me from him.

From the Epistle to the Offertory.

Reflect on the many false accusations that the Jews brought against our Saviour. First, as to his doctrine ; though he is the
way

way and the truth, who neither can deceive nor be deceived. Then as to his works, though most holy, just, and irreproachable.

Learn from the silence and meekness of Jesus, in this occasion, to suffer without murmuration or complaint, whatever injury, false accusation, censures, or malicious interpretations of your doings, or sayings, though innocent and well meant.

From the Offertory to the Elevation.

Consider Jesus offering himself to his eternal Father, his body for stripes, his head for thorns, and his hands and feet for nails.

Return most humble thanks for the same, and for the blood he shed from all those ~~parts~~ parts; to make thereof, not only a bath to wash away the stains of sin from your soul, but also a sovereign balm to fortify and strengthen you in your pains, labours, and temptations. Beg the grace to make use of it in all such occasions.

Offer the sacrifice of Mass for the same intention, for which Christ offered the bloody Sacrifice of Mount Calvary to his eternal Father, and for the intention he now offers the unbloody one.

For

For the exaltation of our Holy Mother the Church ; and for the sanctification and accomplishment of all God's designs in his Elect.

To beg that union and peace may ever be in this family, and that each one of it may be so happy as to praise his mercies for a whole eternity.

And that he would please to grant our Bishop and Superiors, and all that have the charge of us, what is necessary for their own sanctification, and that of the persons committed to their care.

Besides these intentions, add one of these following ones, according to the days of the week.

On Sundays, for the conversion of hereticks and infidels throughout the whole world, especially in England.

On Mondays, for obdurate sinners.

On Tuesdays, for all that are in or near their Agony.

On Wednesdays, for the conversion of England.

On Thursdays, for peace.

On Fridays, for all those that labour for the conversion of souls.

On Saturdays, for our family, and for all its necessities spiritual and temporal, and to obtain a happy death for each of them.

From

From the Elevation to the Division of the Host.

Consider Christ as the Sovereign High-Priest, who on the Altar, as on the Cross, offers himself in sacrifice to his Eternal Father, for to appease his just anger, and satisfy for our sins; blotting out the decree of our condemnation, and signing with his blood a new alliance between his Father and us.

Look on him in the hands of the Priest, as in the arms of the Cross. Your heart must be of stone if this spectacle does not penetrate it with tender sentiments of love and gratitude.

This sacrifice being the same, and of as great value and virtue now as when offered on Mount Calvary, your affections ought to be the same. With what respect, devotion, and confidence to obtain what you ask, ought you to assist thereat?

Approach the Cross of your Saviour with respect, and remember, that when he prays for his enemies and persecutors, it is for you he prays. Beg his pardon for all your offences, and grace to amend.

Then offer him to his Eternal Father, saying: O my God! Father of my Lord Jesus Christ: I offer you the heart of your beloved

beloved Son as he offers it himself : receive it for me with all its affections, and all the acts proceeding from it, for they are all mine, since it is for me that he sacrifices himself. Receive them with all his merits, in satisfaction for all my sins, in thanksgiving for all your graces and favours. Receive them that thereby you may grant me all necessary graces for my salvation and perfection ; and especially the grace of a happy death. In short, receive the affections of that sacred heart, as so many acts of love, adoration, and praise from me : for it is only by means of your Son that we can worthily love, praise, and glorify you.

At the Division of the Host.

When the Priest parts the Host, call to mind the cruel separation of our Saviour's sacred soul from his body. Conceive, if possible, the enormity of sin, which could no otherways be worthily repaired than by the death of God-man.

Weep bitterly for those you have committed ; and resolve rather to die than to deprive Christ of the fruit of his passion, which he only suffered to exterminate sin.

B

At

At the Priest's Communion.

Reflect how the soul of Jesus Christ, as soon as separated from his body, descended into Limbus to comfort with his presence the souls of the Faithful there detained; and by that Divine presence of a hell he made it a heaven.

Beseech him to do the same in your soul, by spiritual Communion, if you are not allowed to receive him sacramentally: but dispose yourself for it by an act of humility, and of contrition, and a great desire to receive him, that you may be united to him: for which effect say,

O my God: I do most ardently desire to receive you, and to have all the dispositions necessary for that effect; but I acknowledge myself a sinner, and therefore very unworthy of it. On this account, I dare not presume to receive you, who are my Lord and my God: but I offer you the devotion and charity, wherewith you were received by your most blessed Mother, and by all your Saints; and the faith and devotion with which all your servants in the state of grace throughout the whole world, do this day receive you.

You

You can, dear Lord, work in me, without my receiving you sacramentally all that you can operate with it ; say then the word, and my soul shall be sanctified and saved. Make me partaker of all the affections and devotions wherewith the just receive you to-day ; and of all the effects which you by this Adorable Sacrament work in their souls ; and of those effects for which you instituted and ordained this Holy Sacrament for the everlasting glory of the Divine Majesty.

Never fail to communicate spiritually at every Mass : For tho' it be not of so great value as Sacramental Communion, yet it is of great advantage if well performed, and the best preparation for Sacramental Communion.

After which imagine you have received him, and entertain him in your heart, as you would do if you had really received him.

Then descend with him in Spirit into Purgatory, and beseech him to comfort and release those Souls, by applying to them the merits of his life and death, and the fruits of Holy Mass.

ANOTHER MANNER OF HEARING MASSES,

*By following our DIVINE SAVIOUR in his
interior sufferings.*

BEfore the beginning of Mass compose yourself in the most respectful posture you can, kneeling with true humility. Then make an act of Contrition for your sins, which have been the cause of the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ; for the greater purity of soul you bring, the more you will partake of the fruits of this Adorable Sacrifice.

Then offer it to God, to render him due glory, to obtain pardon of your sins, victory over temptations, and the grace to fulfil the duties of your state and charge; and for peace, union, and a happy death, both for yourself, and every one of the family.

At the beginning of the Mass, represent to yourself Jesus Christ, in the person of the Priest, he first mounts up to the Altar and then descends; which steps may represent to you the way our Saviour went from the cenacle to the garden of Gethsemani. Then the Priest, bowing his knee,
must

must mind you of our Lord's prostrating himself before the Majesty of his eternal Father in that garden. Endeavour to enter into those dispositions of humility and respect which abases Jesus in presence of the greatness of that Divine Essence before whom all created beings are as nothing.

Then, with great devotion and attention, call to mind all that passed in the garden of Gethsemani; at which all heaven seemed to tremble with a certain horror to behold God in Christ Jesus, under the figure of a criminal, loaded with the execrable sins of all mankind. He suffers there the greatest humiliation and confusion that can be imagined, annihilated before the infinite Majesty of his eternal Father, he makes him an honourable amends, and produces an act of so great sorrow, that he merits absolution and pardon of all mankind.

He there appears a criminal (tho' spotless) and is treated with all rigour by the divine justice. As the victim for sin, he receives the sentence of death, which he accepts of to give us life, and restore to us what sin had taken from us, and he merits for us the grace to enter a commerce with his eternal Father.

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The sight of what he was to undergo and suffer, cast him into an agony which forced blood, as drops of sweat, to fall on the ground from all parts of his body, which, with all he was to suffer, he applied to each soul in particular.

All creatures, says St. Paul, rise up against Jesus, as sinners, to revenge the injury sin does to God. He is abandoned to the powers of darkness, and reduced to such an extremity, that he likens it to the pangs of death, saying, his soul is sorrowful even to death. Sin covers him over with infamy; and in this hateful condition he appears to his own, and to his Father's eyes, who draws due satisfaction from him, and that even to the utmost rigour. The soul of Jesus not only suffers a mortal repugnance of the approach of sin, infinitely odious and detestable to him, but also an extreme apprehension and terror, which sinners have of God's wrath and fury; and this apprehension is as great as the sight he has is clear and penetrating.

In these reflections, or any other mystery of our Saviour's Passion, you may bestow your thoughts till the Elevation.

At

At the Elevation.

Christ, being crucified, was raised on high; see and adore him so in the hands of the Priest. He is sacrificed for your sake on the Altar as well as on Mount Calvary; he thinks of you, prays for you, and offers himself to the justice of the eternal Father, to appease his wrath against you. In a word, he is wholly taken up with your concerns, acting for you on the Altar as on Mount Calvary. Which reflection ought to enflame you with his love, and give you a firm hope that he will be heard, and obtain whatever he asks for you. Unite your intention with those he has for your salvation, protesting that you will all he wills, and that you will stand to what he promises in your behalf.

From that time till the *Agnus Dei*, remain in the spirit of an united sacrifice with Jesus as much as possible, to make the sacrifice complete, according to his merciful designs: with silence and respect annihilated; and, as it were, lost in Jesus, who there offers himself for you. In this manner did his blessed Mother assist at the bloody Sacrifice he offered on the Cross; her eyes and heart fixed on him, by a simple regard, full of respect and love.

You

You may also entertain your thoughts with the words Christ spoke on the Cross; admiring in the first how easily he forgives his enemies; and considering yourself as one of them, heartily beg pardon, and confidently hope to obtain it.

2dly, His liberality to the good thief; beg you may experience the same at the hour of your death.

3dly, His tender love and concern for you expressed by his recommending you to his blessed Mother, in the person of St. John, and speak what affection shall suggest.

At the Agnus Dei.

Consider how our Saviour's love was strong as death; being dead, he is taken down from the Cross to be laid in the sepulchre. Here remember to prepare your heart that it may serve for a tomb to lay him in, for which effect, dispose yourself for communion; and be sure to communicate spiritually, if you may not do it sacramentally. Desire it ardently, that Jesus may live in you and you in him; for which end he instituted it and desires to be received; so that all your thoughts, words, and actions may be the effects of his

his Divine Spirit, and not of your own will. Make acts proper for communion, as humility, love, and contrition, beseeching him to wash your soul from sin with his precious blood, and to come into your heart, and make of it a worthy habitation for himself. And omit not to beg him that, as he refuscitated his body and gave it a new life, he would please, by his sacred presence, to do the same to your soul, giving it a new life, which may be visible by your happy change of inclinations and manners.

The Ends for which Holy Mass was instituted by CHRIST, and is offered by our Holy Mother the Church, may serve for entertainment during the same.

Our Lord's Spirit was that of an entire sacrifice. There are four sorts of sacrifices.

The first of a Holocaust, purely to adore, worship, and praise the sovereign greatness and goodness of God,

The second of Thanksgiving, for the continual graces and favours received.

The third of Impetration, to crave and obtain such graces and gifts as we stand in need of.

The fourth of Propitiation, for the forgiveness of sins.

Our

Our Saviour instituted the Sacrifice of the Mass for these ends, that he might render to God an infinite honour proportionable to his greatness: Give him thanks answerable to his benefits: Satisfy in all rigour of justice for all the sins of mankind, and obtain for us all we want and request.

Our dependence on God lasting every moment, we should every moment adore and glorify him. He bestowing continually new benefits upon us, we should always and each moment offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving to him. Our wants being continual, each moment of our lives would also require an impetratory Sacrifice. Our offences being every moment with an uncertainty, whether any past ones are remitted; each instant of our lives would also exact from us a propitiatory Sacrifice.

Any one of these duties is impossible to us, and much more all of them. In this then consists the admirable blessing of Holy Mass; Christ our Lord fulfilling by it all our obligations to his eternal Father; and that in an infinitely perfect manner beyond all that the saints and angels could do, during a whole eternity.

Our Saviour then offering for us those four Sacrifices in each Mass, it is our duty
to

to offer them with him, either all at once, or one at a time, as may best suit with our present disposition.

As to the first, which is a Holocaust, or Sacrifice of Praise, wholly to adore and worship the greatness and goodness of God.

Sacrifices were established to honour God only, who being infinite in all kinds, contains in himself all greatness, and all excellency, which to honour worthily, should be with the destruction and sacrifice of all that has a being; they ought to annihilate themselves before him as nothing in his presence. But it not being convenient that mankind should be destroyed, and yet necessary that God should be honoured with the greatest honour possible, and that daily, Christ, as head and chief, performs this for us, annihilating and sacrificing himself on our Altars, and putting himself into our hands to be offered in sacrifice to his eternal Father; that thereby we may render to him all the honour we owe him, and all he deserves, or can possibly exact.

This was Christ's first and principal design in instituting this adorable mystery, to render his eternal Father an infinite honour and homage, justly due to so excellent

lent a Being ; and knowing it impossible for men to pay God the honour he deserves, though all mankind together, with all other creatures, should immolate themselves in sacrifice : since all men together are no more than an atom, in regard of the infinite greatness of God, he is pleased to do it, offering himself continually in sacrifice to pay the homage we owe, and cannot satisfy without him.

It is certain that the adorable Sacrifice of Mass renders an infinite glory to God, because the victim that is offered is of an infinite dignity, being God. It follows then, that though we should offer all the sacrifices that have ever been immolated to the Divine Majesty, from the creatures of the world, till Christ's incarnation ; we should not render him so much glory as we do by assisting devoutly at Holy Mass, in which we offer to Almighty God his only Son by the hands of the Priest.

Hence it follows, that God receives more glory and honour by one only Mass, than he receives in heaven from all the Saints and Angels, who continually praise him, though the glory they render him is greater than we can conceive ; nevertheless it is finite, they being but pure creatures : but in the Mass it is a God that sacrifices
and

and annihilates himself, which renders the Almighty an infinite honour. And all that assist at it, and share in that Sacrifice, joining themselves to those adorations which Christ renders, and offering them up to his eternal Father, thereby perform an action more glorious to God, and in some measure more profitable to themselves, than if they were in heaven singing his praises.

What comfort for a soul that truly desires to glorify God and to pay him due honour? How careful should this make us to assist thereat? God, on his side, is so good as to join our interest so with his own, that we cannot promote his glory without advancing our own good: *Would you believe, says St. Augustin, that God, even in the sacrifice he ordains for his glory, seems to consider his own advantage less than ours?*

C

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A MANNER OF H E A R I N G M A S S ,

When we consider it as a Sacrifice of praise only ; purely to adore and worship the greatness of GOD, for which intention we must offer it.

AT the beginning, having placed yourself with great respect and humility in the presence of God, and made an act of contrition for your sins, imagine that an Angel says to you, as one said to St. John, *Ascend, and I will shew you what must be done.*

Represent to yourself the spectacle which was shewn him ; who, wrapt in spirit, saw in heaven a throne, and a person seated on it, and round it a rainbow like unto an emerald ; which throne was surrounded by twenty-four others, on which were seated as many seniors in white garments, with crowns of gold on their heads. And there were also four great animals which never ceased day and night to repeat continually, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Almighty Lord, who was, who is, and who ever will be. And whilst the heavens echo'd the praises and benedictions
uttered

uttered by those animals, all the seniors prostrated themselves, laying their crowns at his feet, and crying out, You deserve, O Lord our God, to receive glory, honour, and power, for you have created all things; and it was because you would have it so, that they have received a being and were made.

Then reflect that this great God has his eyes first upon you, to receive the divine sacrifice you are going to offer by the hands of the Priest; and that an innumerable number of angels, with due respect and fear, surround the Priest and the Altar. With this idea assist at Mass to acknowledge the infinite greatness of God, and to render him all due honour.

Affections.

Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, Master of all creatures; before whom all kings of past, present, or future ages, together with all their subjects, are but as a drop of water, or a grain of sand! You whose Majesty fills the whole universe, and whose lustre dazzles the most sublime intelligences, whose power makes hell to tremble, and whose charms ravish the blessed. Who, with one only word, have

drawn all created beings out of nothing ; and without the least diminution of your treasures have furnished them with all the goods they have.

Behold me your unworthy creature prostrate at your feet, begging that, together with the Sacrifice of your dear Son, you will please to accept that of my unworthy self, and the promises made for me at baptism, and those I made at my profession, which I here again renew.

I adore you my God ; I believe in you ; I expect and hope all from you ; I acknowledge all my love is due to you ; I place all my felicity in loving and serving you.

How sweet is it to have for a Father, so amiable and so powerful a God ! When I reflect that you are willing to be my Father, I grieve that my understanding is so narrow as not to conceive so inestimable a benefit ; and that my heart is not capable to love you as I ought. I adore you, with respect, as my sovereign ; I embrace you with tenderness, as my Father ; and I consecrate myself wholly to you, as my Creator and bestower of my being.

At the Offertory.

Consider Christ as the only victim that can worthily honour the greatness of God.

Offer

Offer him and all his merits to his eternal Father, and so by his means render him all the honour he merits and deserves, and as much as you owe him, or he can justly exact from you. This must also mind you to offer yourself; that is, the sacrifice of your liberty: for he that gives his liberty, gives all, and can no more possess any thing.

Affections.

Take possession of me, my God; for I am wholly yours. Imprint in my memory the remembrance of your presence, and divine perfections in my understanding the knowledge of you, and in my heart your love; and grant me the grace to submit my will to all your laws, and to each point of order for your sake. Destroy, and make me overcome whatever may dispute your right in me. I desire to depend wholly on you: it is you alone, my God, that I desire to serve, and to have no other end in all I do, than the accomplishment of your holy will, and your greater glory: grant me but that, and I will desire no more.

At the Elevation.

It is at that precious moment, that God showers down a deluge of graces into the
 C 3 hearts

hearts of those that are disposed to receive them; a deluge of Sanctity for the just, and of Penance for sinners. And it is then that we obtain of the eternal Father all we ask him by the death and passion of his Divine Son.

Adore our Saviour in the Host, and consider him as a true model of a perfect Holocaust. He has spared nothing, but has sacrificed all for the glory of his eternal Father: thence learn what you ought to do; resolve upon it, and beg grace for that effect.

Affections.

My soul, behold the afflicting state — which your dear Saviour was reduced to upon Mount Calvary, and you shall not find the least thing, neither in soul nor body, which he has not sacrificed for his eternal Father's glory and your salvation.

Sovereign Lord, what obligations have I to you! who not content to have sacrificed yourself on the cross for me, do daily renew the same sacrifice for me. I believe you as really present here, as I do that you are seated at the right hand of your eternal Father. If on Calvary you had the goodness to promise him that I should one day
sacrifice

sacrifice myself with you, the day is now come ; be pleased then to offer me to him united with yourself, for I am so base and unworthy of his acceptance, that I dare not offer myself alone ; but united to you, and offered by you, and despicable as I am, I shall be agreeable to his Divine Majesty.

O eternal Father, behold here your dear, your Divine Son, and for his sake look upon me whom he has redeemed with his precious blood ; since, together with my dear Saviour, I consecrate myself to you, to be disposed of, as it shall please your Divine Majesty, for time and for eternity.

At the Communion.

Jesus Christ present on the Altar, has an ardent desire to be received by you, that he may adore, praise, and worship his eternal Father in you, and pay him, in your behalf, those homages you owe him : and together with himself, offer you up in Sacrifice to his Divine Majesty. Be sure therefore to communicate spiritually, making acts, as if you were sacramentally to receive him, as of humility, contrition, and a great desire to receive him.

After which, consider him in your heart, adore him there, and offer first yourself
to

to him : and then offer him to his eternal Father, and his adorations to acknowledge the supreme dominion he has over you and all creatures, and beg him to receive the same in lieu of all the honour and homage due to his sovereign greatness from you and all creatures. If you desire that your offering may be pleasing to God, you must unite your heart with the heart of Jesus ; for all your tears and sighs, if not united with his, will not touch the heart of God.

Penetrate, if you can, the sacred heart of Jesus, when he offers himself in Sacrifice on the Altar of your heart to his eternal Father. What flames of love will you there discover ! It is there that he contemplates his eternal Father, and profoundly adores him ; offering his body, soul, and all his merits, for the sanctification of your soul, and inflame it with his love.

Of all other means, this of Holy Communion is the most powerful. At Mass never fail to communicate spiritually when you are not permitted to do it sacramentally. And beseech him, who came down from heaven, to enflame your heart with his holy love, that he would please evenness to ¹ inkindle that flame in it, and to teach

teach you the true method of loving him. For if you know that, you know all; and provided he bestows that upon you, let him exact what he pleases, tell him you are content. In short, beg him so to unite your heart with his, that you may be one with him, according to his divine will, for time and for eternity.

The Second Design our LORD had in the Institution of the adorable Sacrifice of HOLY MASS was, that it should be a perpetual Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, which might worthily acknowledge all the divine Favours and Benefits, and render him answerable Thanks.

THE Divine Majesty continually bestowing new favours upon us, we ought likewise every moment to offer him a sacrifice of thanksgiving, which duty Christ knew was impossible to us; and therefore he fulfils that obligation for us, to his eternal Father, by means of Holy Mass (in which consists its greatest advantage); and that in an infinitely more perfect manner than all the Saints and Angels could do during a whole eternity.

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For this end we ought to assist at Mass, that we may thereby render infinite thanks to Almighty God for all the favours we daily receive; since all we are, or have, is his gift to us; and as if that were not yet enough, he has, as it were, drained his greatest treasure which is of an infinite value, and has given it to us; to wit, his only Son, for which none but himself can render worthy thanks.

We should therefore, by necessity, have remained ungrateful, had we not had his only Son, whom he has made ours, by giving him to us, that we may present him in return for all benefits received.

When our Saviour instituted this adorable Sacrifice, the Evangelist observes, that he first rendered thanks to his eternal Father. This is what he continues to do daily on our Altars. He there, in our behalves, renders due thanks for all God's favours, and as much as he deserves; for it being the thanksgiving of a God, it can be no less than infinite; and therefore God can neither possibly receive, nor exact greater.

It follows then, that by assisting devoutly at Mass, and uniting our hearts and will with that of Jesus, we by him and with him
render.

render thanksgiving to God, which is infinite and worthy of himself.

Though we should have been upon our knees, from the first moment of our lives to the last of our days, employed in thanking Almighty God, with all imaginable fervour for all his benefits, and that all souls, both in heaven and earth, should have joined with us, yet we should not so worthily have thanked his Divine Majesty, as we do by hearing Mass devoutly.

What a comfort ought this to be to us, and with what joy ought we to assist thereat; since by it we can worthily acknowledge, and render those thanks to God which are due to him for all his mercies to us.

Let us then, with all possible reverence, offer this great Sacrifice in thanksgiving for all favours received, both spiritual and corporal, for the best means to obtain new favours, is to be grateful for them we have received. And nothing being more proper for acknowledgment than the Sacrifice of Holy Mass, we may offer it for that intention, using the following method.

A METHOD OF
HEARING MASS,

*When we consider it as a Thanksgiving
Sacrifice.*

AT THE BEGINNING.

HAVING placed yourself in the presence of God, and made an act of contrition, represent to yourself the Angels and Saints surrounding the Throne of God, and continually singing canticles of praise and thanksgiving to the glory of their benefactor, recounting therein, and extolling his innumerable benefits. Join yourself in spirit with them, and render the best thanks you are able for all those you have received

Affections.

Being wholly incapable, my God, of rendering the thanks I owe you, I offer you all those that are paid you by the blessed in heaven; begging you will please to receive them in acknowledgment of all your infinite mercies to me. The multitude of your favours are so many, and each
so

benefits bestowed upon us, for which you may begin to thank him.

Affections.

O my God, the Author of my being ! I am indebted to you for the life you have given me ; or, to speak more properly, which you hourly give me ; since if you did not each moment conserve me I should return to nothing. On every side that I turn me I see and enjoy your benefits. All you have made, you have made for my use. Add to this, the evils you have hindered from falling upon me, and the dangers you have drawn me out of : For all which I can never sufficiently thank you. The least I can do in return, is to resolve that for the remainder of my life I will make use of all your benefits to increase your glory ; for which I beg your grace : And if I am not so happy as to give my life for you who are the Author of it and all I have, at least I may thus do it, by abstaining from all you forbid, and exactly performing all you command.

My Sovereign Redeemer and High-Priest, who has paid the price of what I ask, give it me then, with a heart conformable to yours, which may truly and constantly love you,

you, with such a love as may best acknowledge yours to me; which love you only can bestow, and which through your sacred merits I beg,

At the Consecration and Elevation.

Here consider those infinitely greater benefits which God has bestowed on you in your redemption, and return most humble thanks for the same. Consecration representing the incarnation of our Saviour, who descended from heaven into the womb of the blessed Virgin; as he is pleased to descend into the hands of the Priest at the words of consecrating, and, his elevating him, represents his being lifted up when on the Cross, where he expired for your redemption.

Affections.

All your other benefits, my God, compared to these, appear but small; for these are incomprehensible even to the most sublime intelligences. And what renders them still more worthy of admiration is, your having done them for creatures who rather deserved to feel indignation and anger.

O inconceivable source of goodness! What has it cost you to redeem me? This

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adorable.

adorable Sacrifice represents it to me, when by virtue of the Sacramental Words, I adore your sacred Body in the Host, and your Blood in the Chalice: It minds me of those cruel torments you suffered, which forced each drop of blood from your sacred veins, and your soul from your body. Here I lose myself, and can only say, that your boundless love has ever made you forget your greatness and my baseness. None but you, my God, could carry love to so high a pitch.

Whilst you, my Lord, so profusely pour forth your treasures upon me, I am so niggard to you, that when there is question of proving my love to you, by suffering for you, I examine whether I am obliged to it under sin; love and gratitude not sufficing, though by them I am most certainly obliged. A torrent of tears cannot wash off so great an ingratitude: But, dear Lord, I do not reckon upon my tears, but upon your precious blood, both to satisfy for my sins, and to acknowledge your mercies as I ought. I beg that the same love which made you suffer for me, may continually draw tears from my heart for my ingratitude to you. Let your love, to which I abandon all my interest, act this for me. Consult it in all that concerns
me,

me, and give me what it requests of you for me.

In Time of Communion.

Consider that if you really desire worthily to acknowledge God's favours and mercies to you, you have the best of means, and indeed the only, which is Jesus Christ, who is willing to come into your heart, that you may thereby have in his person, wherewithal to offer to God what is worthy of him.

Affections.

O come, dear Lord, into my heart, for it is by your means only that I can worthily acknowledge God's infinite mercies to me, as well as learn to do it. Come, then, and teach me that duty. During your mortal life you gave me example of it, ever rendering thanks to your eternal Father; before you proceed to any action, inspire me with the like sentiments.

And since, for that end, you are pleased to come into my heart, give me leave to offer you to your eternal Father and mine, since he allows me the honour to call him so.

O eternal God! I offer you your only Son, Jesus Christ, to acknowledge your
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merciful

merciful goodness to me your unworthy creature ; for he is mine by your free gift and his ; I offer him then with my whole heart for your greater honour and glory, since nothing can more contribute to it.

O my sweet Saviour, who are so good as to visit me, unite me to yourself, that I may be but one with you by grace, and a perfect conformity of wills. Let the same fire that burns in your heart inflame mine. Make use of me as an instrument to glorify your eternal Father on earth, whilst you thank and praise him for me in heaven.

O love, immense and infinite ! thaw the icy coldness of my heart ; soften its hardness that you may find no more resistance in it to your holy inspirations. Inflame, dilate, and fortify my heart, and grant I may unmeasurably love you, for I cannot otherwise answer your love. I consecrate to you my life, my soul, and all that I am. Dispose of me and all that is mine according to your will ; and let not my will be ever different from yours. I but desire your love, give me that and it is sufficient.

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A Third Design our LORD had in instituting the Sacrifice of Holy Mass, was, that it might be an impetratory Sacrifice ; by means of which we might obtain all necessary Graces to love and serve him ; for which End we ought to offer it.

Our Lord promised us, that all the petitions we should make in his name, should be infallibly granted us. We can never be said to ask so properly in his name and by his merits, as when we present him to his eternal Father to be our petitioner ; when his precious body and blood are actually upon our Altars, where his sacred blood pleads for us ; the virtue of which is infinite, and the voice all-powerful to obtain all that is requested. What can God refuse us, when we offer him a God in payment for what we ask ?

We are assured that the only Son of God is given us ; he is then all ours ; *Parvulus Filius datus est nobis*. Therefore when we assist at Holy Mass, we may offer him as ours, with all the divine acts which his soul then addresses to his eternal Father, and present them as our own. What a treasure have we then in hand ! by means of which, we shall adore, give thanks, and pray by the prayers of Christ. How can we then
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but be heard? How rich is a soul that knows thus how to make use of the great treasure bestowed upon her! which is no less than Jesus Christ with all his merits. Let us then make use of it, to purchase all we want, begging with confidence all we stand in need of, for it is given us for that end.

O excess of goodness! who obliged him to be thus liberal to us! he in a worthy manner performs on our Altars, towards his eternal Father, what we are incapable of doing in a manner worthy of his Divine Majesty, and thereby supplies for all our defects. What cause of joy for us! since all his divine operations are ours, and performed for us. Since in giving himself to us, he gave us all he is, and all he has, without reserve,

It is by means of Holy Mass, that we gain strength to overcome all our enemies, and efficacious remedies to cure our wounds. And our souls are cleansed from the stains of sin, by the blood of the Lamb of God, there offered. Almighty God also affords a more special protection to such as are careful to assist thereat as often as they can. The Council of Trent assures us thereof in these words: *The Sacrifice of Mass does not only obtain us the gifts of penance, but manages*

nages for us the proper helps we have need of in the different conjunctures of this life. Many by means of Mass have overcome the temptations of the enemy that tempted their fidelity to God. One that was tempted to despair, and was upon the point of yielding, being advised by the person he declared it to, to hear Mass every day, which he had no sooner resolved upon, but he was entirely freed from the temptation.

Happy are they that are sensible of the vast advantage of assisting at Holy Mass; for it is the source of all sort of Good. What grace, what favour, what riches, spiritual and corporal, for time, and for eternity!

As with earthly kings and princes, it is all in all to address ourselves to them in a proper time when they are best disposed, and they are likely to be best disposed when great honours are done them. So in regard of God, the properest time to obtain of him what we desire, is the time of Holy Mass, by which he receives an infinite honour, and in which he takes an infinite complacence: which makes *St. Chrysostome* say, that of all times, Mass is the most advantageous time to negociate with Almighty God. For how is it possible that God should refuse us any grace we ask, at the
very

very moment he works so many wonders in our favour, and gives us his only Son, and the same Son offers himself in sacrifice for us.

To profit by it as we ought, our chief design must be to render to God that due honour which this sacrifice only can render him. Then to obtain pardon and remission of our sins, and the grace to overcome temptations, and to fulfil the duties of our state and employment as we ought. That peace may be maintained in our family, and that each may increase in perfection according to God's merciful designs.

An infinity of blessings are wanting to us, and we are oppressed with as many evils and miseries. We have in the sacrifice of Holy Mass, a treasure so great, that all blessings are contained in it, and an universal remedy against all our miseries; and for want of knowing how to make use of it, we are spiritually poor, and oppressed with miseries. In order then to make our advantage of our treasure, we may use the following method.

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The manner of assisting at Holy Mass, when we consider it as an impetratory sacrifice, for which end Christ instituted it, that we might thereby obtain all necessary graces to love and serve God.

AT THE BEGINNING OF MASS.

Consideration.

CONSIDER yourself in the presence of God as a poor beggar at the gate of a prince, infinitely rich, liberal, and powerful. Then reflect that Jesus Christ assures you that you shall obtain whatever you ask his Father in his name; and moreover that he will come down from heaven to join his prayers with yours, and to renew the Sacrifice of the Holy Cross for you, and apply the merits of it to you.

Affections.

O my God, I am sensible of my great poverty and wants, and of my many miseries in body and soul; of my infirmities and weakness in the one, passions and vicious inclinations in the other. My soul defiled with sin, my heart narrow for want of Divine Love. And in the little good I
do,

do, there is so much dross caused by self-seeking, and self-love, that there will be little or nothing worthy of your regard; and what is most deplorable is, that I feel my miseries and wants, and cannot free myself from them.

Come then, my God, and drive away all that you dislike in me, for no less a power than yours can do it; cast out all that is hurtful to me, and cleanse my heart from all that loathsome corruption which dwells in it. Banish thence for ever the tyranny of self-love, under which I groan, together with all that is sensual; and since my heart is so narrow, enlarge it, I beseech you, to a capacity fit to entertain and love you.

O my God, since you have been pleased to give me your only Son, I cannot think you will refuse me what I ask, for he being mine by your free gift, I offer him to you with all his merits; which offering I am sure you will graciously accept; and after having received from me a present of so great value, what return may I not hope from you, who will not be outdone by any of your creatures. I dare affirm that whatever I can request, or you can give, will not be worth the victim I offer you; which raises my hopes to an assurance of obtaining

ing what I ask : for what can you deny me, when I offer you your Divine Son ?

During the Epistle and Gospel. Consideration.

Reflect, that the source of all your evils is the darkness of your understanding thro' want of faith : which darkness is the cause of all you do amiss. For did you know and understand truth, and what God is, you would never cease to love him ; and in all you did, you would seek him only and his interest, and by consequence could never offend him.

Affections.

O my God, the darkness I live in, for want of a sufficient light, is the chief cause of my misfortune and defects. I own it is a just punishment for my sins, and for my having so often slighted the light you gave me ; refusing to make use of it as I ought, when it would have led me through virtue to felicity, and through grace to glory. I therefore have deserved to be deprived of it, and to have my understanding obscured with ignorance, and subject to deceit and error.

O pardon me, my God, and in your mercy now disperse those clouds of darkness
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and ignorance which overshadow me. Let your light shine with such piercing beams, as may not only illuminate my darkness, but also melt and inflame my heart, and make it fit to receive your impressions. Take from me that sadness which darkness breeds, and give me that spiritual cheerfulness and joy which no created good can give, nor evil deprive me of, and which you only can bestow. Give me a profound humility which springs from the light that shews me to myself as I am in your eyes. Let it humble but not deject me.

O did I believe, as I ought, that humility and sufferings is the secure way to glory, I should not have so great a repugnance to what is humbling, not so great a horror of the least suffering, mortification, or self-denial, since faith teaches me that it is the only way to heaven. All is possible to those that have faith, says our Lord, and one grain of it is sufficient to transport mountains. How can I then be said to have any, since I am not able to surmount the least difficulty? When shall I have it? When you, my God, shall please to bestow so precious a gift upon me; for unless you give it, I cannot have it. I beg it then, in the name of Jesus Christ your only Son, who is going to sacrifice himself for me
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on this Altar, for whose sake I beseech you to open and enlighten my understanding with your Divine Light, that I may comprehend the maxims of my salvation and perfection, and rectify my heart that I may cordially embrace the same.

At the Offertory. Consideration.

Let the bread and wine there offered mind you of your own soul and body ; as that is offered to be changed into the body and blood of Christ, beg he will please to work in you a like change, transforming your soul and body into a resemblance of him.

Affections.

My Lord and my God, permit me to offer you my soul and body with the bread and wine that is offered you by the Priest your Minister, to the end it may be changed into the body and blood of your Son ; so let me be changed into a resemblance of him. All is pure in him, and all profane in me. It was to reform what the malice of the devil and sin had defaced of your image, that my Saviour immolated himself on the cross, and it is for that he now sacrifices himself on our altars. Repair that

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image

image in me with the precious blood that ran from the wounds of your Divine Son ; and with the water that issued from his sacred side, wash away all that defiles my soul. Change those perverse and inveterate inclinations which draw me to sin ; and in place of them, give me what may make me truly pleasing to you, as NN. change my tepidity into fervour, and my love of ease into an unalterable patience.

What will it cost you to work this change? one word from your sacred mouth will presently change the bread and wine into the substance of the body and blood of your Son ; add one more in my favour, and it will suffice to make a saint of a sinner. At the birth of time, as soon as you had pronounced that word, *Light be made*, it presently shined over the whole universe. Speak the same word in behalf of my understanding, and those thick clouds which darken it will at the same instant be dispersed. You commanded that the earth should produce flowers and fruits, and immediately it did so. O if you would but speak after that manner to my soul, though but one word with the absolute tone of Master, however barren it be, it would presently become fruitful in all sorts of good works. Say only, Behold my servant, and forth-
with

with I shall have all the qualities of a good one; as real fidelity, prudence, &c. O that I could substitute myself in place of the bread and wine, to be changed in some sort into you! If you said of me, This is my body and my blood, what admirable effects would not those words work in me. At least please to say, This is my image, and I shall be truly so.

At the Elevation. Consideration.

Reflect that Jesus Christ descends from heaven upon your altars, to intercede in favour of you; and it is to obtain you the graces you stand in need of, that he renews the sacrifices he offered upon Mount Calvary.

Affections.

What joy for me, my most amiable Saviour, that you will please to descend from heaven to earth in this conjuncture, when your presence is so necessary. I adore and reverence you as my God, and I love you as my Saviour. You being both my Saviour and my God, what may I not hope for? I beseech you, have compassion on my miseries. Let not your descent from heaven to earth be in vain to me. What

can your heavenly Father refuse you in this state of victim? The profound respect with which in mortal flesh you petitioned his Divine Majesty, made you be ever heard; and when did you ever appear in his presence with more respect, and in a more humble posture, than at present? Speak then, dear Saviour, for me; let all your wounds, as so many mouths, plead my cause. Can you refuse me this at the very time you have the goodness to descend, and to sacrifice yourself for me upon the altar? that is what I cannot believe.

But as I know myself unworthy to be heard, having so often refused to hear and obey your voice, I implore the intercession of your Blessed Mother, and of your Holy Angels; and I assure myself, you will not refuse to hear them who never offended you in the least.

O sacred Queen of heaven and earth! you are the Mother of my Saviour, and you are also mine, though I am a sinner. Have as much compassion for me as you have power with your Son. Employ your credit in petitioning for me his unworthy member, and obtain me what you see I most want, to become truly pleasing to him and you.

O Holy Angels, make appear your love
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to me on God's account. Let not the advantage you enjoy in being disengaged from a corruptible body make you less compassionate the unhappy circumstances of a soul kept down by the weight of her corruptible body. Pray for me to your King and mine, and obtain me the entire victory over all his enemies and mine, both in life and death.

And be mindful also of our afflicted friends in purgatory: you who present the prayers of the saints before the throne of God, offer him this Sacrifice of Holy Mass to obtain their deliverance; especially of NN. who so ardently desire to sing the praises of God with you.

At the Pater noster. Consideration.

Remember, when you address yourself to the eternal Father by the Pater noster, to beg of him that divine nourishment you stand so much in need of, and prepare yourself for spiritual communion.

Affections.

Since you are pleased, my God, to look on me as your child, and to allow me to call you Father, I cannot but expect you will

will give me that celestial food I want. O my God, that I might be nourished with the divine victim which has now been immolated on our altar ! What joy and content would it be to me ! The wearied and thirsty stag desires not so much the cooling streams, as my heart does this victim which is the source of grace.

Come then, my amiable Saviour, the joy of my heart and life of my soul. I have asked a great many things of your eternal Father ; but provided I am so happy as to possess and keep you, I will request no more, for I have all things in you. You are my light, my refuge, my comfort, and my hope. In you are contained all the treasures of heaven : In you is true wisdom, power, and all happiness. What remains then to be wished or desired more, but only that you will please to remain continually with me whilst on earth, and that I may remain for ever with you in heaven ?

Then in the heart of Jesus, which you possess, and by the merits of it, beg of Almighty God all your spiritual wants, especially a happy death : And you may then accept of death for love of him who died for you, and to satisfy for all your offences against him.

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A Fourth Design which our LORD had in instituting the Sacrifice of Holy Mass, was, that it might be a propitiatory Sacrifice to obtain Forgiveness of Sins, and satisfy for them in all Rigour of Justice.

A Sacrifice of Expiation, is what we offer to obtain remission of our sins. In sin there are two things; the guilt, which is the offence of God, and pain due to that offence. Sin, if mortal, is only blotted out by perfect contrition, or attrition joined with confession, and the punishment due to it, only by the painful exercise of penance, or by the application of the merits of our Saviour's life and death. One of the principal effects of Holy Mass, is to obtain us the grace of contrition, and to make us partakers of the merits of Christ, whose sacred body is offered for the sins of men, and for the pain due to them, and for that intention we ought to offer it.

What would have become of all mankind after the sin of Adam, had not the sacrifice offered on the cross appeased the anger of God, and satisfied for the injuries sin had done him? And since that, what would become of men who daily offend and injure God, if the same Redeemer did not daily continue to immolate himself for

for us upon our altars? By which he restores to his eternal Father the glory which all sinners, as far as they are able, be-reave him of by their sins.

Though we should fast all our lives with bread and water, give all the treasures of the earth in alms, and employ ourselves in continual prayer, and that to the end of ages, all this, weighed in the balance of divine justice, would not have the weight of one only Sacrifice of Holy Mass, which is of an infinite value; and all other things, in comparison of it, are as nothing.

With what confidence and comfort ought we to assist at Holy Mass, it being the most powerful means to satisfy entirely for our sins? Just the same as if we had been present at Calvary, and taking up the blood which fell from our Saviour's wounds to the ground, had offered it to his eternal Father, in satisfaction, and to have obtained pardon for all our sins. As we should not then have doubted of it, we ought no more to question it now, when at Holy Mass we offer the same blood unto his Divine Majesty, to satisfy for them. If with a firm faith and sincere sorrow we do so, there is no offence, however great, which this sacrifice will not wash away.

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Yet though the Sacrifice of Mass be of its own nature infinitely satisfactory for the punishment due to sin, nevertheless the quantity of the application is greater or lesser, according to the greater or smaller disposition of them for whom it is offered, or of them that are only present at it; it is what the words of the sacred Canon teaches; *whose faith and devotion is known to thee for whom we offer, and who offers unto thee.*

When you assist at Holy Mass, offer our Saviour's precious blood to the eternal Father, beseeching his Divine Majesty to receive the blood of his only Son, which you may offer as belonging to you by his free gift. Beg him to take it and pay himself therewith, for what you are indebted to him by your sins; and ask victory over them, and pardon for them. Have confidence that he will grant your request for his dear Son's sake, but acknowledge that having so long continued in sin, you deserve to die in it; nevertheless hope in that precious blood that pleads for you, and demands its price and salary, having been shed to cleanse you from your sins.

There is not a more powerful means to obtain true contrition than the Sacrifice of Holy Mass. Let sinners who desire their conversion

conversion come with confidence to it : Jesus Christ will speak in their favour, and will appease the just anger of his eternal Father, and obtain for them the gift of penance. This the Council of Trent teaches us.

It is not less certain that our Saviour communicates to us at Mass the satisfactions which he offered to his eternal Father for us, dying on the cross ; insomuch that the pains we so justly deserve in punishment are diminished, if not entirely remitted, by virtue of the Sacrifice of Mass. And not only the living have part in this benefit, but also the souls in purgatory, for it is the most efficacious and infallible means to help and assist them.

The gift of penance being one of the fruits of this Sacrifice, sin ought not to hinder us from approaching, but rather should be a motive for our coming to it. For would it be just to hinder the sick from using remedies, or keep the dead from the source of life ? It is by this Sacrifice that we obtain the grace of penance ; and if sinners return from it as they come, without the least change, it is not because the blood of Jesus Christ did not cry for mercy in their favour, but because they rejected it.

A reason why we reap so little fruit from so powerful a means, is because we assist at it after so cold and tepid a manner. If we reflected, as we ought to do, that Christ labours there for our reconciliation with his eternal Father, as most certainly he does, should we not join with him? He there endeavours to repair the honour our sins snatch from his Divine Majesty, and to satisfy his offended justice. We ought then certainly to keep ourselves at least united to Jesus as much as possible during the time of Mass, that so the Sacrifice may be fully accomplished according to his merciful designs on us.

We must consider the Sacrifice of Mass as the monument of peace between God and us by means of Jesus Christ. The altar may put us in mind of Mount Calvary, where with his precious blood he cancelled our debts, and established us again in the grace and favour of his eternal Father, and the same he performs on our altars. If the least venial sin deserves death, we ought to die, else to find a victim to be sacrificed in our place; this victim is Christ, who dies daily, and is offered for the expiation of our sins.

O excess of goodness! my dear Redeemer, not content to have once paid the debt due

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for my sins, with the price of his precious blood shed on Mount Calvary, but daily continues to pay it by offering himself for the same end in the Sacrifice of Holy Mass. What can be compared to this charity? Who is like my Saviour in goodness, who gives himself and the treasures of his merits to pay what I owe for my sins.

A Manner of Hearing Mass when we consider it as a propitiatory Sacrifice for our Sins, for which End we must offer it.

Consideration.

WHEN the Priest is at the steps of the altar reciting the Confiteor, imagine yourself to appear in the sight of Almighty God all covered with sin, which is so detestable to him. Conceive a true confusion, and humbly acknowledge yourself a sinner, and incapable of repairing the injury you have done to God, or satisfying for your sins; then reflecting that Jesus Christ offers to satisfy his eternal Father for you, raise your hope and confidence in his goodness.

Affections.

My most dear Saviour, you are my only hope. Your presence puts fear and despair
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to flight ; it is in your sacred merits that I place all my trust and confidence. How great is my obligation to you, my dear Redeemer, for vouchsafing to be my bail, and to pay those debts which I could never have paid. If malice could have equalled so great a goodness, mine had done it, since, instead of spending my life in loving and serving so good a Lord, I have employed it in offending you.

How often have I abused your goodness, slighted your friendship, contemned your love, and turned the stream of mine (which you only can challenge and deserve) towards creatures ; thus preferring my own will to yours.

Behold here a copious subject for your pardon, and an ample object to exercise your mercy on. Pardon, O infinite Abyss of mercy, pardon the multitude of my offences. From the bottom of my soul I cry to you, I have sinned, and my sins are in number more than the hours of my life ; but though equal to the minutes I have lived, your mercy pardons all, and for one *Peccavi* from the heart are remitted ; O forgive my unfaithfulness. Besides your pardon for the past, give me amendment for the future. Give me grace by the merits of this Sacrifice to sin no more ; or if

sin be still necessary to suppress my pride, at least grant me a perfect contrition. Inkindle in my heart that flame charity, that I may love you purely for yourself.

O love of my God, which as much exceeds our love as you Lord excel us ! you witness it by dying for us, not only once, but daily dying mystically on our Altars. Give me a gratitude as ample as these benefits. Take from me what is mine, and odious, and give me what belongs to you. Give me an upright heart, and a will conformable to yours, and in all my thoughts, words, and actions, let me have no other aim but your will and greater glory.

O my God and Father ! but shall I dare call you so, after having so much offended you ? Being sensible of my unworthiness, I durst not do it, were it not for the precious Blood your Son shed, which he will here offer for me. If my sins provoke your just anger, his Blood will move your compassion. If you are deaf to my sighs and tears, you will not be so to his Blood, which cries louder than that of Abel, not for punishment but pardon of my crimes. Besides I know you had rather be esteemed the Father of mercy than the God of vengeance ; all which makes me hope that you will not reject a contrite and humble heart ;

heart; especially when presented by your Son, who, as our High Priest, is going to immolate himself in favour of me; for his sake receive me again as your child. Say to the ear of my heart, *You are my child*, which words will give a new life, and breathe a better soul into me. Imprint in my heart and actions the character of a good child; and give me not only that which children use to want and Fathers bestow, but give me what the depth of my necessity requires, and the greatness of your goodness knows how to give. Change my heart into that temper which may please you most. Give me a humility as profound as the nothing from whence I came, or rather as deep as the abyss into which my sins have cast me. Renew in me your image which by sin I have defaced, and destroy all that is offensive in me, and make me what I ought to be, for to be your worthy child. Let neither pleasure, fear, nor force startle me from my duty, or make me offend you.

In Time of the Epistle and Gospel.

Consideration.

Reflect, that all your sins are breaches of God's law, which you ought to have

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inviolably

inviolably observed. How ungrateful have you been to have preferred to it the law of flesh and blood, and of your own will. Beg grace, that for the future you may make the Divine Law the rule of all your actions.

Affections.

O my God, in hearing your law read, do I not hear my condemnation? since I have not made it the rule of my life, nor preferred it before all things, as I ought to have done, but, on the contrary, have preferred my own will and the law of flesh and blood. I have not only omitted to do what it ordained, but have also done what it forbids. I know my faults exceed all pardon and mercy but yours, which is infinite, and which your goodness excites my heart to hope for, and my tongue to ask. For though your facility in pardoning be so great, yet it behoves me humbly to ask it; I will then make it the first of my many requests.

Pardon, O infinite goodness, what none else will. You have writ my pardon in bloody characters, let not the black ingratitude of my sins have force to blot it out. Had I as many lives to give as you have received wounds, all would be too small a ransom

ransom to redeem my sins, and too poor an offering of thanksgiving for my redemption and your sufferings.

Grant, my dear Lord, that for the future no terror may have power to make me sin, no torment to remove me, nor pleasure to entice me from your love. Take me wholly to yourself, but better me in the taking. Take soul and body; let my body be immured with your law, and my soul centered in yourself; that the one may never more transgress, nor the other have any motion but from you. Put your mark upon me, imprint the sign of *Tau* upon my forehead, that wherever I go, it may be visible that I am yours.

But how dare I petition so great a favour after such great infidelities? It is the confidence I have in your goodness that encourages me; for did I not believe you were more prone to mercy than to justice, I should not have presumed to ask it.

At the Offertory. Consideration.

Reflect that all your evils come from preferring a sensual life before a spiritual one; which the bread and wine may represent to you as sustaining the corporal life. Be confounded, and beg grace to do otherways for the future.

Affections.

Affections.

My God, confiding in the merits of the victim that is going to be offered to you ; I hope, and beg pardon for the too great tenderness and care I have taken of this body of corruption, which has caused most of my faults. Passion and sensual pleasures have drawn me to sin ; and yet, though I know them to be enemies who conspire my ruin, I cannot resolve to declare war against them. Assist me, my God, with your all-powerful grace ; for as it is impossible for me to rise from my ill habits and my self-love without your help, so neither can I stand, that is, be faithful to you, without the continuance of your mercies. Grant me both through the merits of Christ your Son, and my sweet Saviour, who is going to sacrifice himself for me.

My dear Saviour, blessed be this hour in which you are going to offer to your eternal Father, for my salvation, and the remission of my sins, the greatest of sacrifices, that is yourself. A far less sacrifice from so great a Priest, could not chuse but find acceptance. What then may I not hope from this, in which you are not only the Priest that offers it, but also the victim that is offered.

I hope for no less than pardon of my
sins,

sins, and all that may be for your glory, and my soul's good ; as a pious life, and a most happy death ; the accomplishment of all your merciful designs over me : and that you will please to change my heart into a heart that may resemble yours, and be according to your desire. I purely desire this, that it may be less unworthy to be presented to you. Imprint your law in it, and give me the grace to observe it, and to cause it to be observed. Bless, and look favourably upon all in this Family, and give them all that your mercy has designed for them, as also to all my friends and relations. Make them your faithful servants, and grant them the grace to live holily and die happily.

At the Elevation. Consideration.

Represent to yourself Jesus Christ fastened to a Cross, to expiate the sins of all mankind. Consider in his passion, as in a faithful mirror or glass, how enormous sin is. At this spectacle, excite your heart to conceive so great a sorrow of them, as never more to commit them.

Affections.

O my soul ! what is represented to us by
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the body of Christ on the one side and his blood on the other, and himself lifted up in the Host, but his Sacred death on the Cross? all that our eyes behold here, is a lively representation of the bloody Tragedy acted upon Mount Calvary.

My divine Saviour, after having adored you as my God, permit me to ask you what has reduced you to this deplorable condition? 'tis sin; 'tis to expiate the disobedience found in all the sins of mankind, that you are obedient even to the death of the cross; as also to satisfy for the pains they deserve, that you suffer such sad torments.

O infinite goodness, to suffer so much for me your enemy, who had a hand in all you suffer! 'twas not so much Judas that betrayed you, as my treacherous heart; not so much the soldiers that struck, reviled, and spit upon you, as did my passions. 'Twas my sensuality that scourged you; my gluttony that gave you gall; in short, 'twas my sins that nailed you to the cross, drew all the blood from your veins, and bereaved you of life.

Lord, what have I done in sinning? taken away your life, and crucified you anew. After such proceedings, I might with reason despair, did I not hear you pray upon the cross for your Crucifiers, which prayer cannot

cannot fail to be heard, and to obtain what it asks, and that is the pardon of my sins. Add to this favour the grant of N N. and a true and perfect sorrow for having ever offended you, which may preserve me from doing it again. I here offer myself in satisfaction for my sins, and to suffer for your love whatever you please, provided you will grant me your love and your grace, which I most heartily beg through the merits of this Sacrifice ; and that you will please to unite all I shall do and suffer to your sacred merits ; without which, all I can perform will avail me nothing.

At the Agnus Dei. Consideration.

Be persuaded that you can never better atone, and satisfy for your sins, than by offering Christ and his Sacred Merits (which you possess in communion) both to his eternal Father, and to himself. 'Tis likewise the most efficacious means to preserve you from falling into sin. Therefore whenever you offer up the Sacrifice of holy Mass for your sins, fail not to communicate at least spiritually.

Affections.

Come my most amiable Jesus, come ; for you come chiefly for sinners. Come then
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to me who am the most unworthy of them. But before you enter to make your offering, consecrate the temple of my heart so much defiled by sin, and profaned by the idol self-love. Break and destroy that enemy of yours ; and since all things are possible to you, change the love I bear myself into your love, and so make a great saint of a great sinner.

Pardon, dearest Lord, my sins and misdemeanors for your mercy's sake, for tho' I do not deserve it, yet you having merited it for me, I request it on your score. You have done abundantly more than sufficient to satisfy for all my debts ; I therefore lay claim to pardon. Grant it me then, since I can pay you more than enough ; for I give you, dear Jesus, your death and passion, which you have given me, with the which you must needs be satisfied, and I cleared from guilt.

What will you lose by forgiving me ? Who will blame you for that mercy ? On the contrary, you will acquire great glory by it ; for it is ever more glorious to your name to save than to condemn ; it is therefore I beg it. Pardon that vast multitude of my sins which I have incurred, partly through ignorance, but much more thro' wilfulness ; in both I have offended you.

Cure

Cure also those wounds they have caused in me; your wisdom knows the depth of them; your power is able, and your goodness, I am sure, is willing, which gives me hopes much larger than my fears have been.

The inveteracy of no disease can make resistance, if you command all maladies will obey you. Say to me only, as to the leper, *volò mundare*, that word will restore me to perfect health: For as your word alone created me, so your word can again repair me. No distemper can remain in me, if you will but say you will have me be freed. Take away the cause, pull up the root, self-love, which is the origin of all.

I know you more desire what I ask, than I do who ask it: grant it me then, to fulfil your desire. Give me also love, and a true zeal of your glory; but give me plenty, for I cannot be satisfied with a little, nor is it glorious for your name to give sparingly. My Jesus do this for me, and let me know what you desire of me, and I will bestow the remainder of my life in performing it: Or if you think fit to punish me for my sins and misdemeanors, I beg it may be so, as to correct and not
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harden

harden me, as to bring me to you, and not drive me from you.

*Motives to raise our Esteem of HOLY MASS,
and to dispose us to profit by it.*

Mass is the golden key of heaven, God the Father gives it you, and with it we may have all other blessings if we will. If then we find ourselves poor in virtue the fault must be ours, for God, by this key, opens his treasures to us, and would liberally bestow them upon us, did we not hinder him by not disposing ourselves to receive them. If we draw but little advantage from Holy Mass, it is our own fault; if our debts are still great, it is a sign we do not take care to pay them by the means God has so bountifully furnished us with.

St. Chrysostome says that the Angels are so well acquainted with the efficacy of the Mass, that they are in expectation till it begins, judging it the most favourable opportunity to obtain favours for us of Almighty God.

All the value and efficacy which was originally in the bloody sacrifice on the cross is entirely translated to the unbloody sacrifice

sacrifice of the Mass, by which sacrifice the former is applied.

Though our sins are forgiven by absolution, there commonly remains some temporal punishment to be undergone either here or in Purgatory. Holy Mass, if well made use of, is abundant satisfaction to the Divine Justice for our debts, though never so great. What a comfort ought this to be to those who, by reason of their natural constitution, are not able to practise many or great austerities; and what return should we make to our Saviour for the same.

If our devotion, in assisting at Mass, be great, our advantage will be also great; if little, it will be but little. We may gain more by hearing one Mass devoutly, than by twenty without devotion.

The Sacrifice of Holy Mass is but the general and particular means to give ourselves entirely to God, and to ask and receive from him all sort of graces. Endeavour daily to assist thereat; first, that you may worthily honour and adore God in all the extent of his divine perfections, and him for all the graces and favours his mercies have, and do daily bestow upon all his creatures; particularly on yourself and all that relates to you, as each one of

his family, and to satisfy his justice for all your own sins, and to obtain of his goodness those gifts and graces necessary not only for yourself, but for all those for whom he has shed his most precious blood.

The reason why we profit so little by Holy Mass is, because we go to it with so little sense of the immense treasures which are communicated to us by means of it : as if the blood of a God were a thing of small account to merit us heaven, to obtain us pardon for our sins, to appease the Divine Justice, and to acknowledge worthily the favours God hath done us, and his love for us in the most blessed Sacrament ; all which is performed by the means of Holy Mass.

That you may reap the intended profit for your soul, you must prepare yourself daily for hearing Mass, as if you were to communicate ; that is, with as great purity as you can ; and beg our Lord, who instituted this great Sacrifice, to renew the memory of his death and passion, and the efficacy of it, to grant you the grace, not only to assist at it, but also to partake of this divine mystery according to his merciful designs.

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And to partake more fully of the efficacy of Holy Mass, when we consider it as a Sacrifice of propitiation for our sins, we must make acts of sorrow for them.

And when we offer it as an impetratory Sacrifice, we must actually request something in general or particular; otherways we let the credit of the Son of God, which is communicated to us, remain useless and unprofitable. For as we all want merits which might find credit with God, we must not omit to offer those which Christ gained by the Sacrifice he offered on the Crois, which he has given to us, and they are applied and communicated to us by the Sacrifice of the Altar.

Whenever we have any thing to ask of Almighty God, the true and best means to obtain it is to request it in consideration of the masses that are said upon earth, and in respect of the merits of the Son of God, which are applied to us by means of them.

*An Oblation of the Sacrifice of Holy Mass,
to be made before Mass.*

My God, I acknowledge that I merit not so much as the least of your favours, and that I have nothing which can move you

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to unlock your treasures, or bestow upon me what I stand in need of. But since Jesus my Saviour has made me heir of all the merits of his life and death, and applies them to me by the Sacrifice of Holy Mass; I offer them to you, and by them beg that you will please to grant me all that is necessary for my Sanctification, and the perfection you require of me; together with a perfect contrition which may wash away all my sins; also your love, in which I may live and die; and all virtues that are suitable to my vocation, and those natural and supernatural talents necessary for the amplification of your honour and glory; and the comforts of this life in such a degree as may be necessary for my Salvation.

I also beg the conversion of sinners, the perseverance of the Just, the Sanctification of those that are under my care, the exaltation of our Holy Mother the Church, the extirpation of heresies; the consolation of the afflicted, the prosperity of my parents and relations; the pardon of my enemies: and that you will please to shower down your blessings upon our holy Father the Pope, and all Christian Princes; especially upon our King, Queen, and Prince: and grant that England, and all misbelieving

lieving kingdoms, may be converted to the true faith. 'Tis through the merits of all the masses that will this day be offered throughout the whole world, that I beg the grant of these my requests. Look not on my unworthiness, but on the merits of your well-beloved Son, which are sufficient to render the most unworthy most deserving of your favours.

Shew therefore, O Eternal Father, in this occasion, both your justice, and the efficacy of your Son's merits: give him that due recompense, which I do not deserve; I ask it in his name, and behold him coming upon this Altar to join his prayers with my petition, therefore your honour is engaged to hear him, and to render yourself favourable to those whom he commands to ask in his name, and to whom he communicates his merits and credit. Behold I am one of them: honour him therefore, I beseech you, by granting me what both he and I most earnestly beg of your Divine Majesty, which is my salvation, and all the aforesaid requests, as far as they may conduce to your greater glory.

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An Oblation of the Circumstances of Holy Mass, which are the prayers and ceremonies that we may partake thereof.

My God, I unite myself with the Priest whom your Church sends as Embassador to your Divine Majesty ; I join myself to all the praises he shall give you, and to all the adorations he shall render you, and prayers he shall address to you ; and to all the good desires he shall conceive. And I beg to partake of the spiritual food he is to receive.

A Method for hearing MASS according to the four Intentions for which CHRIST instituted it, and our Holy Mother the Church offers it.

FROM the beginning of the Mass till the Gospel employ yourself in making acts of repentance for your manifold sins committed against God, considered as your God, your King, and your Father.

From the Gospel till *Sanctus* bestow in acts of thanksgiving for the many great benefits you have received ; especially for that of communicating himself to you in the adorable Sacrament.

From

From *Sanctus* till after the last *Elevation* bestow in oblation of this dreadful Sacrifice, saying, great God receive this holy Sacrifice in which your Son offers himself, and is offered by the Priest to render you due homage and worthy thanks for all your benefits. Receive here also the entire Sacrifice which I make of myself; of my body, of my soul, and of all that I am: which I have united with that of your dear Son, for whose sake receive me, and the promises made for me at Baptism, together with those I made at my profession, which I here renew, and beg by the precious blood of Christ, which I adore on the Altar, grace to fulfil them perfectly.

From that time till *Agnus Dei*, make petitions for all you want, and first ask to be freed from the evils that may be a hindrance to your salvation; and which you have reason to fear, both during life and at your death.

Then beg, through the merits of Christ, all that may conduce to God's glory, and your own good; as pardon of your sins, the gifts of faith, hope, and charity, and a perfect conformity to God's will. A pure intention in all you do; a pious life, and a happy death.

Pray

Pray for your Friends, and for each one of the Family you are in, that God will please to bring them to that degree of sanctity and perfection, which his mercies have designed them ; and keep them all united in perfect peace and charity.

Offer your requests for our holy Mother the Church ; beg her exaltation, and the extirpation of heresy ; true repentance for sinners, a happy death for those that are near or in their agonies ; and release from purgatory for the faithful departed, especially N N.

From *Agnus Dei* till the last blessing, employ in preparing for, and making your spiritual Communion. Produce the proper acts, to wit, humility, contrition, and a great desire of receiving your Divine Saviour. For which you may use these or the like affections. :

My sweet and amiable Jesus, I am not worthy that you should think of me, and you not only think of me, but also offer yourself to me in the Holy Eucharist, having an ardent desire to enter my heart, and to remain for ever with me. How great and admirable are your mercies ! how excessive is your goodness ! what is there in me capable to invite you ? or rather, what is there not in me to disgust you

you from coming to me? you can find nothing in me but crimes, infidelities to your grace, tepidities in your service, and yet you desire to lodge in my heart!

Come then, dear Jesus, come, for I truly desire you; come into my heart, and form it according to yours. Annihilate that pride, self-love and self-will, which you find in it, and all other evil inclinations which displease you: and in place of them establish your humility, meekness, obedience, zeal, and whatever may render me agreeable to your eyes. Grant me the grace to seek no other happiness but the accomplishment of your will; and your greater glory in myself, and those under my care, that so I may express my love to you. By your precious Blood I beg this grace, and that I may suppress all self-seeking, and interest which may anyways oppose the same.

Considering with the eyes of faith Jesus Christ in you by his Divine Spirit, return him your most grateful thanks, saying,

O Jesus, with my whole heart, I most humbly thank you for all your favours and mercies to me; and above all, for the frequent visits you have made me in this adorable Sacrament: and for descending this day from your throne of glory to our
Altar,

Altar, to be the food and nourishment of my soul, which I beseech you to take full possession of, and dwell for ever in my heart.

At the last blessing, beg the Father to bless you, the Son to protect you, and the Holy Ghost to sanctify you. May the blessing of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be upon me, and all I shall do; and remain so for ever, Amen.

During the last *Gospel*, give thanks for the favour granted you of assisting at Holy Mass, saying,

My Lord, God, and Saviour, I praise and thank you, and desire that all the Saints and Angels may bless and glorify you in my behalf, for those amorous thoughts you had for me from all eternity, and for all the graces you have bestowed on me by means of this great Sacrifice; and for granting me the favour of being present at it. Increase in me your love and grace, and grant that during this day I may pass no hour without elevating my heart and thoughts to you, as a grateful return for so great a blessing. Take possession of my heart, for it belongs to you alone.

We

We may very much enrich ourselves if every morning, and every hour of the day, we offer all the Masses that are said that day and night throughout the whole world for the four ends for which it was instituted, and is offered: for so we shall render ourselves partakers of the fruit of them all. And there is no hour of the day or night in which Mass is not said in some part of the world.

Whenever we have any thing to ask of God, the best means to obtain it, is to request it in consideration of the Masses that are said upon earth, and in respect of the merits of the Son of God, which are applied to us by means of them.



Whoever makes Use of these Methods for Holy Mass, I beg they will have the Charity, for God's Sake, to join me with themselves, and my Necessities with theirs: that in their Act of Repentance for their Sins, they will deplore and beg Pardon for mine: in their Thanksgiving, that they will render Thanks to God for his Mercies to me: in their Oblation, offer my Heart and Soul to God: and in their Petition beg for me what they request for themselves, especially the divine Grace

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and love. And as I hope the Use of these Methods will be in Vigour when I am dead, I entreat their Charity to be mindful of my poor Soul in Time of Holy Mass.



Motives to move us to hear Mass for the poor Soul in Purgatory.

We ought to be persuaded that we cannot exercise charity in a manner more pleasing and agreeable to Almighty God, or more profitable to ourselves, than in offering this sacrifice for the souls in Purgatory. If therefore we give to them those satisfactions we could appropriate to ourselves, we shall be well repaid for it. First, by the merit we shall have for that act of charity; and secondly, by the gratitude of those souls in praying for us when they are in heaven.

When we resolve to give them this great advantage, we may do it in this following manner:

O my Lord and Saviour, since you are pleased to charge yourself with the sins of all, and to pay with your precious Blood the pains justly due to them, be pleased to offer to your eternal Father
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the torments of your Passion in exchange for those which the souls in Purgatory suffer.

I beg you will mercifully shorten, and, if it may be, put an end to the pains which they suffer. 'Tis with my whole heart that I give them the satisfactions which your goodness would apply to me by virtue and means of this Sacrifice. Since, dear Lord, I can give you nothing, for what do you stand in need of? I esteem myself happy in contributing something to the solace of your Friends and Servants; those Holy souls who feel those devouring flames burn with an ardent desire to see you. What happiness for me, thus to contribute to it!

And you, O Holy-Souls, when you shall be in possession of that heavenly kingdom prepared for you, treat with Almighty God in my behalf, and obtain for me the same possession. Amen.

A MANNER OF
HEARING MASS,

In Honour of the Incarnation and Nativity of our Saviour ; to be used on the 25th of each Month, that being the Day of the Month that Jesus Christ was incarnate, and born for Love of us.

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MASS.

WHen the priest descends the steps of the Altar, reflect how the world had been irrecoverably lost, if the word of God had not been pleased to descend from heaven into the womb of the blessed Virgin, and become man to redeem us from eternal Misery.

Render thanks to the most blessed Trinity, for being pleased to make use of so admirable a means to work our Salvation. Thank God the Father for loving the world so much as to give his only Son for it. Thank God the Son for abasing himself so far, as to cloath himself with our flesh, and subject himself to our miseries. Thank God the Holy Ghost for operating this so admirable a mystery ; and for forming of the blessed virgin's purest blood the
body

body of Christ, which afterwards was to be nailed for us upon a Cross.

At the Gloria in Excelsis.

Reflect how all the Angels in heaven celebrated a feast at the moment the word was incarnate; rejoicing that by that means men would fill up the vacant places, caused by the fall of Lucifer and his followers. What ought to be our joy who have so great an interest in it !

But this advantage, we must understand, regards only persons of good-will ; that is, of a will conformable to God's will, docile to his voice, and who faithfully practise his law. Endeavour to be of that number.

At the Offertory.

Consider how Jesus Christ, from the first moment of his conception, cloathed with human nature, as with sacerdotal vestments, begins his Sacrifice. My God, said he, you would have no more oblations nor victims, but you have formed me a body. Holocaust and Sacrifices are no more agreeable to you for sin ; then, said I, behold I come, as it stands written at the
H 3 beginning

beginning of the book. I come, my God, to do your will.

Since Jesus Christ is willing to be immolated for your sins, conceive a firm hope to obtain remission of them; beg him to offer himself again for those you have lately committed, that you may obtain pardon for them, and the grace of a sincere repentance and contrition.

Grieve that it was not in your power to consecrate yourself to Almighty God from the first moment that your soul animated your body. At least, offer yourself now to Jesus Christ, united to him as a member of his mystical body; and resolve to sacrifice the remainder of your life to the accomplishment of his divine will.

At the Canon of the Mass.

Call to mind the longing desires of the Patriarchs and Prophets, to see the Messiah, and the continual sighs sent up to heaven to beg him to hasten his coming. Join yours to theirs, and press our Saviour to descend upon the Altar, saying with those holy souls, O heaven, grant us the just man we expect; he will be to us as a refreshing dew, and will render our souls fruitful of all good works.

At

At the Consecration.

At the very moment that the Priest pronounces the words of Consecration, imagine how the Angels in great numbers descend with their Lord King: *We announce to you great joy, for this day your Saviour is born for you.*

Acknowledge him and adore him under the appearance of bread and wine. It is the same God whom the blessed Virgin held in her arms, wrapt in swadling clouts and laid in a manger.

At the Division of the Host.

When the Priest parts the Host, call to mind the painful Circumcision of our Saviour. See how at the same moment that he takes the name of Jesus, he does the office, shedding his blood for our salvation. Desire ardently to receive that Sacred Blood into your heart, one drop of it is capable to sanctify the whole world. Reflect what may be the reason why, after having so often received it, you remain still the same.

At

At the Agnus Dei.

Reflect that it is not without mystery that Jesus Christ is born in a stable, which is to signify that there is no heart, however poor and vile it be, which he disdains to enter, provided it desires his coming, and disposes itself for the same. Secondly, reflect that he is the Lamb of God who was sacrificed on the Cross for our sins, and is desirous, on the Altar of our heart, to offer himself again to his Eternal Father for the same end.

Prepare yourself for this Divine Victim, that your soul may be fed with the Body and Blood of the Innocent Lamb.

At the End of Mass.

After having received him really or spiritually, entertain your Divine Saviour, and beg him to remain hidden in your heart as he was at Nazareth, that so he may help you to labour and work as he did his blessed parents; and work with you joining his hand to yours, without which, acknowledge that nothing will be done well.

Resolve as much as he shall, by his grace enable you, to be watchful, and careful
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to secure him from the persecutions which daily and hourly will be raised against him, attempting at his life: For sin, as well as Herod, seeks to destroy him. See how you may defend him, and arm yourself against that monster.

A Manner of Assisting at HOLY MASS, considering our Death as a Holocaust and Sacrifice of Thanksgiving. It is to prepare us for Death, Mass being the most proper Time for that Preparation, since it is a Commemoration of CHRIST'S Death, in which his Merits are applied to us.

CONSIDER your death as a Holocaust or Sacrifice of Praise, to adore and worship the greatness of God. Endeavour to render it so by acts conformable, and therein employ yourself from the beginning of Mass till the *Sanctus*.

At the Beginning of Mass.

Consideration.

Reflect that sacrifices were ordained to honour God, who is infinite in all kinds, containing in himself all greatness and excellency; which to honour worthily, it ought

ought to be with the destruction and sacrifice of our lives; life being the greatest thing we have of ourselves to offer.

Affections.

My God, though my death is inevitable, yet in acknowledgment of your sovereign dominion over me, and for love of you, I am resolved, as much as in me lies, to make it voluntary; and, therefore, I now freely offer myself to it: So that could I avoid dying, I would not, that by my death I may make restitution of all I am to your Divine Majesty who gave it me. I rejoice that by death I shall be no more in a condition to resist your will and dominion over me as Lord and Maker. I accept of death in punishment for my having so often done it.

My God, I acknowledge and confess before heaven and earth, that you only are him *that is*, and I rejoice at it with my whole heart; and I, poor creature, am he *that is not*. I embrace, with humble submission, the destruction of my body, which by death is to return to dust or nothing from whence you drew it. I humbly adore the decrees of your providence, and submit to whatever you have been

been pleased, from all eternity, to ordain concerning my death. And because I know not what will then be the sentiments of my soul, I desire now to perform that which I wish then to do, and beg you will be pleased to accept it now for that time.

I adore you, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one in essence and three in persons, and I love you with my whole heart. I acknowledge you as Author and Principal of my life, both of nature and grace. I firmly believe all you have said, and as firmly hope all you have promised, because you are truth itself, and can neither deceive nor be deceived. You are an infinite Good, containing in yourself whatsoever is good ; therefore I love you above all things, and that purely for yourself.

It is for your sake alone, my God, who are infinitely amiable, and can never be sufficiently loved, that I detest all my sins, because contrary to your sanctity. I detest them for the same motive that Christ our Lord detested them in the garden of Gethsemani ; and for the same motive that my God detests them, I offer you, in reparation of the affronts you have received by them, the love with which your only
Son

Son and his blessed Mother loved you, and the love with which all the Just upon earth, and Saints and Angels in heaven love you, and with which you love yourself.

I desire that the last motion of my heart may be an act of adoration to pay you due homage for my being, and an act of love whereby loving you for yourself, and in the last moment of my time, I may continue to love you for eternity.

I adore your power which created me, your goodness which redeemed me, your providence which has care of me, and your mercy which has pardoned me so many offences. I adore also your justice, and abandon myself to it, but with this confidence, that your goodness and mercy will never forsake me, but plead for me before your justice ; and obtain that I may for all eternity sing forth your mercies. Full of this sweet and amorous confidence, I hope to see and enjoy your blessings in the land of the living, of which you are the resurrection and the life.

At the Offertory. Consideration.

Reflect that Christ not only offered his life and merits upon Mount Calvary for
your

your salvation, and to purchase for you all you shall want for that effect, but he is also pleased to do the same upon our altars : Now what is more necessary for salvation than a happy death ? Confide therefore, since he will obtain it for you.

Affections.

Innumerable are the thanks I owe you, my dear Redeemer, for thus sacrificing yourself for me ; all I can offer in return, is my life, which I offer as a victim to honour you ; and that it may be worthy of your acceptance, I unite it with yours, which you offered for me on the Cross, and are now going to offer for me here. Let the fire of your love consume this victim, that so it may be grateful to you.

O infinite Goodness ! you are all love. Loving me, though so unworthy, with an infinite love. I give you my heart, fit it for yourself, and fill it with your love, that so from this instant it may of sinful become holy. I offer myself a Holocaust, that is, my life with all the objects of it. All I have or could love in it, all the satisfactions I could draw from it, all which I freely offer to you ; destroy both them and me by death ; so that if it please
I you

you to take my life this moment, I readily submit to it, and truly desire to die now, that I may enjoy you, and be no more in danger of offending you.

But if it be your will and pleasure to leave me yet some time in this dark prison of my body, grant me the grace from this instant to love nothing but you, whose love has redeemed me, and bought me with no less a price than your precious blood, as a condemned criminal begged from the gallows for experience: but what experience, dear Lord? To try if, after such preventions, I could come to love you. O work that love in me, and destroy all that opposes it. Let it take up all my thoughts, actions, and affections, and in a word my whole heart.

From Sanctus till Agnus Dei, consider your Death as a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving.

MOTIVES to accept and offer it as such.

God requires Sacrifices of Thanksgiving, under pain of withdrawing his affection and favours from us. St. Bernard speaking of ingratitude, says, that it dries up the fountain of goodness, the dew of mercy, and the current of God's graces.

IF

If you desire not to be guilty of it, offer to God the sacrifice of your life, and with it all that might be a pleasure and contentment in it, as a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving. Rejoice that you have *that* to offer in return for what God has bestowed upon you, and desire that you may soon offer it.

Affections.

O my God! How great are your benefits to me, both in number and worth, and how kind your way of bestowing them on me. If I should spend every moment of my life in thanksgiving, yet I should not be able to return due thanks for one single benefit; for, besides those favours common to all your creatures, your particular providence has been most liberal to me; in my education, my vocation, the innumerable and powerful helps you have given me for my salvation continued by you, though neglected by me. The many dangers, both of soul and body, which you have secured me from, preserving me from death, when in the state of sin, &c. add one more to these, I beseech you, which is a happy death.

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Accept,

Accept, in thanksgiving, the sacrifice of my life, and all I am and have, which by death I sacrifice to you. And I desire now actually to offer it, if such be your divine will and pleasure; if not now, whenever you please. In the mean-time I offer the sacrifice and myself to be sacrificed; and I wish I could every moment offer the same, and had I a million of lives, I would offer each of them a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving. Accept, my God, this free and willing oblation I make you of my life, and with it all earthly enjoyments; for were it in my power to avoid death, yet I would die in return of thanks for all your favours and mercies to me; and especially for your having died for me: for whatever else I offer it is still but part of your gifts, but by death I sacrifice all.

At the Elevation.

Consideration.

Having adored Jesus lifted up by the hands of the Priest, as he was upon the Cross, call to mind that when he was upon earth he said these words: *no man can shew a greater love than to give his life for him*

him he loves. This Christ has done for you; love and gratitude obliges you to do the same for him.

Affections.

O my God, since love has made you die for me, it is but just that with a good will I accept of death for love of you. Had I a thousand lives, I would give them all to acknowledge this your love to me. I embrace death in return; and rejoice that this body of sin will be by it destroyed in punishment for my having offended your goodness. Let earth return to earth, but grant that my soul created to your image, and redeemed with your Blood, may return to you. This is what I earnestly beg, recommending it *now* for *then* into your sacred hands.

I do most humbly thank you for all your benefits, as I desire to do at the last moment of my life; in which possibly I may be deprived of both speech and reason: and therefore not able to speak, or even think of you. Therefore be pleased now to receive my thanksgiving for all your benefits to me, general and particular, known and unknown;

but above all for that Blood and life you offered for me on Mount Calvary, and daily offer on our Altars, allowing me the happiness to be present, and applying to my soul the merits thereof, through means of the Sacraments. For all which I offer all the adorations, praises, and thanksgiving, which the humanity of my Saviour and his blessed Mother rendered to you, O Eternal Father! and those which all the Saints and Angels have, and will render you for all eternity. And all the Sacrifices of Mass, which have been, are, or shall be offered you till the day of judgment.

And when in my Agony I shall not be able to adore, praise, and thank you my God, I desire still to be united to all those that do it both in heaven and on earth. And I offer *now* for *then* my agony, my sweat, and my sufferings; to be joined and united to the bitter agony, the bloody sweat, and dolorous sufferings of my dying Saviour, for the remission of my sins, and for the eternal glory of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: whose name be for ever praised, and will for ever be done, in me, and by me, for all eternity.

now for *then* my agony, my sweat, and my sufferings; to be joined and united to the bitter agony, the bloody sweat, and dolorous sufferings of my dying Saviour, for the remission of my sins, and for the eternal glory of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: whose name be for ever praised, and will for ever be done, in me, and by me, for all eternity. O

O my God! I abandon myself to your Divine will; and to the judgment you shall pronounce on my soul: and I submit to it with my whole heart, confiding in your goodness that you will save a soul, you have loved so much as to send your only Son for its redemption and salvation.

For Communion.

Consideration.

Reflect how the same Jesus Christ, present on the Altar, has said: that he who shall eat his flesh shall live for eternity, and shall not die for ever. Beg that this may be fulfilled in you; and confide it will be so, since you have his word for it.

Affections.

How comes this happiness to me, that my God should vouchsafe to visit me! Lord I am not worthy that you should enter my soul, speak only the word, and my soul shall be saved. I firmly believe whatever you have said, and therefore, unworthy as I am, I desire to receive you,
that

that so I may be made worthy to live for ever with you. Grant that this heavenly food may be to me a preservative against all my enemies at the hour of my death, and that I may receive it with the dispositions most pleasing to you. And since you are pleased to promise that those who eat your flesh, and drink your Blood, shall not die for ever; I confide in your mercy, that I shall not die that eternal death: and I beg that whilst I live I may never die by sin, which I dread more than any temporal death.

My Saviour and redeemer, the Sovereign object of my heart! take possession of its affections. Sanctify my soul, and replenish it with your grace; to the end that all the remaining moments of my life may be entirely spent in your love.

I desire now to die, having received my God and Saviour; that separated from all earthly things, and from this my body; I may for ever be united to you with an unchangeable affection. Jesus, my Jesus, be to me a Jesus especially in my last hour; and fortify me in my passage out of this world, against all your enemies and mine.

Then

Then take, as it were, an oath of allegiance; renew your vows, and the promises made for you at Baptism. Beg your Sovereign Lord never to leave you. Say to him, with the Disciples of Emaus,

Stay with me Lord, for it is late, the best part of my life being spent, and the evening of it now approaches. Or else with holy Simeon: let your servant depart now in peace, for not only my eyes have seen, but my Heart has received the Author of my Salvation. And with the Royal Prophet: although I walk in the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, because you, my Lord, are with me.

Put yourself, dear Lord, as a seal upon my heart, that nothing but you may find entrance there; I unite this Communion with that I shall make at my death; and both with that you made before your death: and also with the Communions of our blessed Lady, and all your Saints during their lives, that those may supply for all the faults I have, or ever shall commit in receiving you.

I beg, dear Saviour, that you will make me partaker of those Sacred dispositions which your Divine Soul had at the last moment of your life, to the which, I with my whole heart unite mine; that they

they may supply for all my defects at my death. Dear Jesus be to me a Jesus, especially at the hour of my death. I abandon myself entirely to you, to suffer for your sake the pangs of death. And I renounce and disavow all impatience, or any evil I may be tempted to commit.

At the Benediction say,

O most Blessed and undivided Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, I adore you, and consecrate to you my Heart and all its affections. Bless me now and at the hour of my death, as you bless those that are yours; and bring me with them to that everlasting glory which you have designed for me; that I may for ever bless and praise your mercies. Amen.

A Manner of assisting at HOLY MASS, and preparing ourselves for Death, by considering our Death as a Sacrifice of Propitiation for our Sins, and Impetration of eternal Happiness.

MOTIVES.

THE prayer Christ made for us, tho' of such force, and the sacrifices of himself offered for us, though of an infinite value, will avail us nothing, if they are not applied to us. Now they are only applied to us by our prayers and sacrifices offered to him. The best sacrifice we can offer, is certainly our lives, which we may offer as a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins, because that all things, and all the satisfactions which we might severally offer in sacrifice to God, are all victims of this sacrifice: Therefore, if we sincerely, with an humble and contrite heart offer our lives, that offering will effect the full pardon of our sins, and by an entire atonement blot them out. God is pleased to give us an example of this in the third book of Kings, in the person of the Prophet sent to Jeroboam, who, for punishment of his sin, was killed by a lion; but

but because he accepted the punishment with submission, and willingly offered his life to atone for his sin, death thus accepted of by him made him again a just man, and acceptable to God.

We cannot have a true contrition, unless we are willing to destroy our past sins by such a sacrifice as offers in satisfaction for them, whatever proved an unjust satisfaction to us, and was cause of our offending God. By death we do this; therefore, who really, willingly, and actually receive and offer their death as such, have certainly the true contrition that blots out all sins.

At the Beginning of Mass.

Consideration.

Reflect, how Adam having sinned, God, in punishment of it, ordained that he and all his posterity should die. This is due to us on account of that sin; but how much more have we deserved that punishment on account of our own sins?

Affections.

Since death, my God, is the punishment you ordain for sin, it is with an
humble

humble and submissive heart to the decree of your justice that I accept of it ; and in the spirit of penance I accept of all the pains, humiliations, and privations which accompany it, in satisfaction for all the sins I have committed, which I am truly sorry for : O pardon me, my God, I beseech you !

How great is my ingratitude to your Divine Majesty, who drew me out of nothing, and gave me all I have ; and I have disowned your sovereignty over me, by refusing to subject myself to your law. You could at each moment have punished me, and I slighted your justice, and offended you with so little fear and so great liberty : I have dishonoured your sanctity by the impiety of my sins, and your goodness which adopted me for your child, by refusing to obey and honour you as my Father. You proffered me a share in your happiness, in your glory ; nay, in yourself, if I would be faithful to you, and the least difficulty has made me other-ways.

Had I but once offended you, it were still too much, but I have multiplied my sins above the hairs of my head. My iniquities and offences are so many, that I

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cannot

cannot look through the numberless multitude of them.

In every place, surrounded with your gifts, have I sinned. No moment of my life which has not been stained with different sins, and this, after pardons so frequently obtained. Besides, how many have I caused to sin by my ill example?

Pardon, my God, these crimes, for I am truly sorry for them, and detest them with my whole heart. I wish I were capable of an infinite sorrow to blot out the guilt of them. Accept, Lord, in lieu of the grief that is wanting in me, that which my Saviour had in the garden of Olives and upon the Cross for the sins of the whole world, and of mine in particular. Purify me from my secret sins, and pardon those I have committed by others. Despise not, my God, a contrite heart, which only hopes for pardon from your infinite mercy, and the promise you made, that when a sinner is sorry for his sins you will no longer remember his iniquities.

If, dear Lord, I have ceased to be your dutiful child, you have not ceased to be my loving Father. All that I can offer you in satisfaction for my sins and ingratitude, is but my life, which I offer you with a very good will, as a propitiatory victim ;

victim; and with it I offer the privation of all I have loved, liked, or enjoyed when I offended you. At this very instant, if you please, deprive me of all, and of my life. I resign it to you with my whole heart, and would think myself most happy if you did it by violence of the grief you give me for having offended you: But if you defer taking the whole sacrifice, take at least what part you please, I resign it to you, and only beg you will give me the grace to be sanctified by it.

At the Offertory.

Consideration.

Reflect that Christ, your model and example, offers himself to his eternal Father to die for satisfaction of your sins, well may you offer yourself to do the same.

Affections.

O eternal Father, behold your dear Son, who, out of his abundant charity for me, offers himself to die, for to satisfy for my sins and offences, it is but just that I do the same; I offer you, then, my liberty and my life, my heart and my soul, but

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united

united with his, that so it may be grateful in your sight. I accept of death with all submission; and I offer it to your Divine Majesty for expiation of my sins; and that as a criminal, guilty of treason, whom you have justly condemned to die. I am glad that my body will be reduced to earth, to punish my proud mind, and all the faults I have committed for its sake; but grant that my soul may return to your hands from whence it came.

I resign myself to all the bitterness, pains, and anguishes; to all temptations, (sin excepted) is all the satisfaction I can make your Divine Majesty; having nothing more of my own to offer, I beg you will please to accept of this *all* that I can give; and remember not my sins and iniquities, but remember that I am the work of your hands, the price of your blood, the conquest of your Cross, the pledge of your death, and the effect of your love. It is to your death that I unite mine; it is to your love that I join mine, with this protestation, that I will admit of no other sentiments but those conformable to what faith teaches; and that I will be moved with no other thoughts than those of hope in your mercies and love of your goodness;
if

if any thing pass in me contrary to these, I disown, extract, and detest them.

I recommend my soul into your hands, it is what you have bought with the price of your blood. Be mindful, dear Lord, of all you have done for it, and forget all it has done against you. You were pleased to declare, *that you will not the death of a sinner*, to wit, eternal death; *but that he be converted and live for ever*. It is what I beg for the sake of your most precious passion and death; and since you have said it, I hope that the sentence which will decide my eternity, will be such as to procure my eternal happiness.

It is true, my God, that notwithstanding all this, I am very full of fears, my sins being so great and your judgments so terrible; but yet my hopes are still greater, because your mercy is great, and you forgive all that confide in you. I cast myself into the Abyss of your mercies, full of repentance for having so often offended you, and had I but this moment left, I would employ it in loving you. The greater my sins are, the more glorious it is for you to pardon me, on which account I beg it.

From the Preface till the Elevation.

Reflect that the victim must necessarily die before we can enter our happy inheritance. A good christian cannot enjoy that supreme Good who has not first ardently desired it: For not to desire it is a contempt of it; and that is such a fault that will not be repaired but by an ardent desire of the said happiness. It is contempt not to desire eternal bliss far more than the preserving human life, so as not to be content to sacrifice our temporal life to obtain eternal. We ought also to desire to make the exchange soon; for what we really desire we are eager to possess.

Affections.

My God, I firmly believe each point of faith. I am ready to sign any of them with my blood; in particular, all you have revealed of that blissful eternity; *where your servants enter into your joy; become like to you, because they see you as you are; dwell in you as you dwell in them, and possess that kingdom prepared for them before the creation of the world.* I ardently desire to be dissolved here by death, that

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I may be with you, my God. And having nothing but my life to purchase it, with all I might have enjoyed by it, I here offer you the sacrifice of both, accept it; dear Lord, and let a speedy death complete the Holocaust. *Hasten that day, when joyful tidings will be brought me that I must go into the house of our Lord, where God dwells, and I shall possess the freedom and liberty of his children.* Send my deliverer a happy death; I expect it, and will embrace it with open arms, hoping by its means to get into yours. I fear it not, under the covert of your mercies, insured to me by the blood of your Divine Son, which he shed for me, and is this very moment going to offer the same for me on this Altar.

At the Elevation.

Consideration.

With all imaginable respect adore Jesus Christ elevated on high. Reflect that it is through the sacred merits of his death, that you can only hope, and lay claim to eternal life. Look on him in that state in which he negotiates your salvation. Beg him to form your death by the model
of

of his ; for you cannot die well unless he makes you partaker of his interior dispositions.

Affections.

Eternal Father, behold here your dear Son, who is pleased to offer himself and his merits for me ; it is by them that I have a just title to an eternal possession of your Divine Majesty, and of all in you. Your Son, Christ Jesus, has laid down the full price of it for me. I have no other title to it, nor do I desire any other. His death for me, is my security for eternal life ; and with full confidence I challenge it in his name and by his merits, which he has bequeathed to me as an inheritance. It is what I ardently desire, and will firmly hope for, because your unerring word assures me of it ; for they that hope in you shall not be confounded.

My dear Saviour, who not only would die for me, but also suffer a most cruel agony, I adore each of your interior motions, even to the last moment of your life. I adore your last thoughts, words, and sufferings. I adore the last sentiments of your sacred humanity, and the last application of the powers of your soul. I
offer

offer you my death, and the last moment of my life, in honour of your most holy death, and last moment of your sacred life.

Dear Jesus, bless my death and sanctify it by yours. Unite it, Lord, with yours. Make me partaker of those divine dispositions with which you rendered your soul into the hands of your eternal Father. Grant that the last sigh of breath I take, may be consecrated to you, and be a perfect act of love.

As you accepted of death from the first moment of your incarnation, and remained in the same acceptance all the days of your life; in like manner I, from this moment, accept of whatever death you have ordained for me, and will, with your grace, remain in a constant resolution of dying for you according to your will, in the spirit of obedience; heartily desiring that the last use of my liberty may be an act of obedience to your divine will in honour of that last act you produced on the Cross, when, bowing down your sacred head in obedience to the divine decree, you rendered up your blessed soul. I also accept of death in the spirit of love. As your death was the most pregnant testimony of your love for my soul, so I desire to give my life (which, according

according to nature, is most dear to me) as the greatest proof I can give that I truly love you, and have a sincere desire to be where I shall ever love you, and never more offend you.

At the Agnus Dei.

Consideration.

Behold Christ in the Blessed Sacrament as your strength, your hope, your support, as the pledge of your salvation, and of a happy eternity.

Affections.

Come, sweet Saviour, come and take possession of my heart, it is yours by so many titles; sustain, comfort, and assure it against all the terrors of death and apprehensions of my salvation. Say to my soul, especially at the hour of my death, as you did to your Apostles, *It is I, fear not, peace be with you*, no attempt of the enemy shall hurt you. Say but these comfortable words, and my soul shall be saved.

Who am I, great God, that you should vouchsafe to visit me? You truly verify what you once said, that you come to save those

those in danger to be lost. I have reason to fear, when I think what I have deserved for offending you ; but yet much more to hope, when I reflect what you have done to merit my salvation. I acknowledge you for my God and my Saviour, and as such I confide in you. It is in your merits that I place all my hopes of salvation, fortify me in my passage out of this world to eternity.

Since you have been pleased to visit me, I beg you will leave me some tokens of your presence, giving me victory over all my enemies, sins, and passions ; especially that from which I may fear the worst consequences at my death. Do not refuse me this, since it is for your glory I beg it. I am sensible that my continued offences deserve that you should let me die in them, but the blood which you have shed for me, cries out to you, and demands its price and salary ; since it was shed for no other end than to cleanse me from my sins, and merit eternal bliss for me, which I confide you will grant me through its merits.

What shall I render you, my dear Saviour, for all you have done for me ? But what shall I return you for yourself which you have been pleased to give me ? I will return you my life, because that includes
all

all in my power to give. I really desire then to die, if such be your will. Please to unite my death with yours, and say to my soul before she quits her earthly habitation, as you did to Magdalene, *many sins are forgiven you; and if you cannot say, Because she has loved much; say at least, because you have loved her much.*

Eternal Father, your Son has given himself to me, that I may offer him and his merits to you to pay my debts, and purchase what I stand in need of. I then present him to you, with all the merits of his life and death; and beg by them to be discharged of the heavy load of my sins, and enriched with all I want to render my death precious in your sight; and that I may receive all the last Sacraments, with dispositions necessary to receive the grace and virtue they bring with them. With joy I receive death from your hands, because it gives me to you, and alone can bestow you upon me by a happy exchange.

Death being the greatest concern, and it being uncertain what deaths we shall die, and whether our last sickness will permit us to think of God; and though it should, whether we shall be capable of strengthening ourselves then by those interior acts of virtue requisite to prepare for
so

so dangerous a passage ; let us, with God's grace, every week, for the remainder of our lives, hear one Mass according to the method here set down to prepare for death, endeavouring to perform the acts therein mentioned, as if we were presently to depart out of the world ; and beseeching Almighty God to grant that they may supply for those which probably we may not be in a capacity of making in our last sickness ; for if we can, at that time, make any, we must expect to make them with difficulty and less perfection.

A METHOD OF
HEARING MASS,

For the Souls in Purgatory.

BEFORE MASS,

The Offering and Intention.

MOST Adorable Trinity, it is in your name, and for your honour, that I desire to unite myself, not only with the priest who ascends to your altar, but also with the Priest of priests, JESUS our
L
Mediator

Mediator with you. I desire to offer you, with him and by him, the sacrifice of his body and blood, to render your supreme greatness all the homage that is due to you; to thank you for all your benefits, natural and supernatural, which you daily bestow upon me, notwithstanding my unworthiness, and obtain of your infinite mercy the pardon of innumerable sins; as also to draw down your benedictions upon the whole Church, especially upon my parents, benefactors, friends, enemies, and above all, upon my unworthy self.

But my God, it is not only this which calls me now to assist at, and offer this great sacrifice, it is also charity to the poor souls; the sad state they are in obliges me to concern myself for their relief, and to offer this great sacrifice for them, which I do, in honour and memory of our Saviour's passion suffered for them; to beg that the merits thereof may be applied to them; to give worthy thanks for the favours granted them, of having departed this life in your grace and love, to satisfy for the punishment due to their sins, and to implore their speedy deliverance out of Purgatory.

Another motive, which excites me to assist the poor souls, is to repair the glory which

which I have so often robbed you of by my sins ; and this I think I cannot better perform than by endeavouring to procure the release of some soul out of Purgatory, that going to heaven it may burn in your love, and render you the due honour and glory which my wicked life has deprived you of.

At the Beginning of the Mass.

Consider how desirous the Angel Guardians of the poor souls are, that you should succour their pupils ; and how attentive they are, to see with what fervour and devotion you treat with Almighty God concerning their deliverance.

At the Confiteor.

Bowing down with the Priest, cast the eyes of your soul to the bottom of Purgatory, and there discover how the tormented souls, with joined hands, beg the assistance of your prayers. Join your voice with theirs, and cry for mercy in their behalf, by the repeated petitions to the Sacred Trinity, of *Kyrie Eleyson, Christe Eleyson*. Think how highly it grieves those faithful

departed, that ever they offended God.
Make an act of Contrition for them.

At the Epistle.

Reflect, how faith teaches us, that all the faithful, who die in the grace of God, are not always so pure, but that there remains some debt to God's justice which must be satisfied, either in this world or the next. Now how few are there who have had either the courage or the time to expiate, by a severe penance, the many mortal and venial sins which they have committed? They are then obliged, by God's justice, to expiate them in Purgatory, from which they will not be released till they have entirely satisfied for them.

My God! who those souls are, your secret and impenetrable judgment permits me not to know; but I may and ought to believe that there are many in that rigorous prison, whom the most indispensable duties of nature and religion allows me not to abandon without relief. Many, perhaps, may be my ancestors, my relations, friends, well-wishers, and benefactors, who, in this world, were zealous for
my

my good. Others also, who through the ill example I gave them of a soft and unmortified life, or by my too great compliance with them, or theirs with me, have contracted faults for which they have been long, and are still detained in those devouring flames.

O my God ! though I should have no particular obligation to those friends of yours, so cruelly tormented, and so worthy of compassion, burning in fire and flames, ten thousand times hotter than any in this world ; though I should no ways have contributed to their sufferings, and the retardment of their happiness, yet they being your children and elect, and your glory requiring it, I most heartily beg their deliverance, that they may ascend to heaven, and there see, bless, and praise you ; where their love for your Divine Majesty will be more pure and ardent than 'tis possible for any upon earth to have. Dear Lord ! put a speedy end to their pains, that they may be translated to the State of Glory, which you eternally designed them ; and give me the advantage of procuring them that happiness, that I may gain those blessed souls for my powerful intercessors to your Divine Majesty.

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At

At the Offertory.

Reflect, that for certain, the most efficacious succour we can procure for the Souls in Purgatory, is to offer, for their deliverance, the immaculate Lamb of God, whose infinite virtue is most efficacious for the living and the dead.

My God ! what victim can I offer you, proper to appease your Justice, but your only Son ? It is him I offer with my whole heart, and with an entire confidence, though sensible of my own unworthiness. I beg and conjure you to cast your eyes upon this adorable Holocaust, your only Son, who is going to be offered to you in the odour of sweetness ! It is not only a lively representation of the bloody Sacrifice, which disarm'd your anger, and made you recall the sentence of condemnation you had pronounced against us, but it is in substance and virtue the same Sacrifice.

Divine Jesus ! Host of propitiation for the living and the dead : I adore you, and return you millions of thanks, for having confided to us this offering of your Divine Body and precious Blood, for the solace of the Souls in Purgatory. Acknowledge the equity of your judgments,

ments, I admire the excess of your Charity! and as you are Redeemer, I implore your merits for the release of those you punish as judge; especially N. N. for whom I offer this Mass.

Give, dear Lord, a fresh proof of your infinite bounty to those suffering souls, by drawing them from the devouring flames; and give me the grace to prevent your justice, by a Purgatory of love and grief, which may exempt me from ever undergoing that of your rigour. *Amen.*

When you hear Mass for your Parents, say,

My God, you have commanded me to honour my Father and Mother, and by a singular mercy you allow me the means of testifying my love and gratitude to them after their death, by offering the Sacrifice of Holy Mass for them. I with all my heart beg their solace and deliverance, and desire the same for all the faithful, whom your justice retains in Purgatory. I wish to love you, and to detest all sin for them. Grant I may, with them and with your Saints, see and enjoy you for all eternity. *Amen.*

At

At the Sanctus.

Consider those poor souls surrounded with flames of fire, like so many prisoners loaden with chains. See how they endeavour to get free, and fly to heaven to the living God. Beg their solace and deliverance heartily of him ; saying,

Merciful Creator, let one drop of that precious Blood which fell from the wounds of your dear Son and my Saviour, be applied to the suffering souls in Purgatory ; since it was shed for them, so let it solace, comfort, and release them.

And grant me the grace to blot out my offences in this life by contrition and penance, to avoid the rigour of your justice in the next ; and to purify my soul for the heavenly bliss, where none can enter with the least spot or stain.

At the Elevation.

Behold Christ, when lifted up, as on the tree of the Cross ; and reflect that in the midst of his torments, turning to the good thief, he said, *This day you shall be with me in Paradise.* Beg him to say the same to the poor souls, now he is in his kingdom, and confide that through
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the merits of this Sacrifice he will do so.

O Eternal God ! behold here on this Altar, as on the Cross, your only Son the worthy object of your complacence, who only merits to be heard. He sacrifices to you, not another's flesh but his own body and blood ; that body which was torn with stripes, and all covered with wounds, to repair and satisfy for all offences committed against you. That blood, which was shed to blot out the sins of the world, is here offered ; he immolates himself with the same love and charity now as he did on the Cross. Let one drop of his most precious blood be applied to the poor souls, it being more than sufficient to quench their flames, and free them from the pains of Purgatory.

Can you, my God, refuse to hear the voice of your dear Son, infinitely sweet, and equally powerful and strong, which demands of you mercy ? It is not, my God, to your justice that we address ourselves, I know that those souls for which we presume to plead for deserves all the pains they suffer for their having offended you, and for their having had too little zeal for your glory, and not sufficiently revenging and punishing the offences and injuries

injuries they had done you, having too much spared themselves upon earth, they justly suffer more rigorous pains than penance would have required of them.

But remember, O great God ! infinitely merciful, that Jesus Christ, their charitable Mediator, did not spare himself for their salvation ; all his blood was shed for them ; his heart was plunged in sorrow for them ; their redemption is not only abundant but superabundant ; let them find in those treasures of his immense satisfactions wherewithal to discharge all their debts.

I beg and conjure you, dear Jesus, whom I believe as really present on this Altar as you are in Heaven, to speak in favour of those souls who, though designed for your kingdom, yet will be long excluded from it, if you do not intercede for them,

At the Pater Noster.

Say it with the Priest as a most efficacious prayer to obtain relief for the poor souls, and believe that every word you pronounce with fervour, is a great solace to them.

At

At the Agnus Dei.

Reflect that on the Altar is the same Lord, who heretofore assured his Apostles, that all they should ask his Father in his name, he would grant them. Believe it, because he said it, and say,

O Eternal Father! behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world; I humbly beseech you, for his precious Blood and sufferings, that you will be merciful to the poor souls for whom I hear this Mass, and grant them their deliverance, or an abatement of their pains.

Dear Jesus! those souls burn more by the ardour of their charity, and the desire of seeing you, than by the activity of the flames which purify them. They suffer a most violent thirst, and there is none but you, O amiable and merciful Jesus! that can open to them the source of living Water, which they so ardently sigh after. You only can put an end to their banishment, of which each day seems an age; be then, dear Saviour, their powerful Mediator.

Pie

Pie Jesu Domine dona eis Requiem. Amen.

At the Communion.

Dear Saviour, although I am most unworthy, yet I desire to receive you, and that to obey your will, to glorify your name, and to be united to you, and render the merits of your passion efficacious both for my own soul, and the souls for whom I offer this Mass. Grant, dear Lord, that the effect of this communion may be eternal life to my soul and theirs.

Great is my hope and confidence, since I hope for no less than yourself, my God, with everlasting life and glory; and that the poor souls, through your mercy, may be speedily translated to the fruition of your beatifying presence, there to love, bless, and praise you for eternity.

At the Last Blessing.

Receive the Priest's blessing, and beg the blessed Trinity to bless the suffering souls created to his image and designed for his glory: Say,

Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, bless all the poor souls, and bring them to eternal bliss. Amen.

Of

Of the Profit we ought to draw from Holy Mass, and the Return we ought to make to God for it.

We owe more to God, and to his Divine Son Jesus Christ, for the benefit of Holy Mass, than it is possible for us ever to repay. Whatever we can do, we still shall remain infinitely indebted for it, not only during life, but for a whole eternity.

Though we can never return what we owe, yet we must, at least, return what we can, to acknowledge the benefit of Holy Mass, and to imitate our dear Saviour, who therein daily offers himself a sacrifice for us. We must offer all our actions to God as so many Sacrifices and testimonies of our engagement to his service, and submissions to his will. Holy Scripture gives the name of Sacrifice to almost all good actions; and St. Augustin says expressly, that each good action is a true Sacrifice.

Now as we are composed of body and soul, there are two sorts of Sacrifices which we ought to offer; the first consists in referring to God all exterior and sensible actions; and the second, in consecrating to him all the motions of our heart and acts of our will.

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This is the double Sacrifice which St. Paul exhorts us to make, and which, to be acceptable to God, must be animated with charity ; that is, God's love. Reason, as he says, engages us to render that duty to God, for we have received all from him, and consequently owe all to him. It would be an act contrary to the rules of Justice and Reason, to employ for any other use but God's service, what we possess purely from his liberality.

St. Paul makes the interior Sacrifice chiefly consist in two things : The first is to strip ourselves of the sentiments and inclinations of the Old Man ; and the second, to assume the sentiments and inclinations of the New One, Christ Jesus.

God does not exact the same exterior actions from all ; for each one must act according to the state his Divine Majesty has placed him in ; nor does he exact the same interior degree of perfection. Nevertheless he will have our whole life be a perpetual Sacrifice to him ; which it will be, if we consider our employment as a commission from God, and accordingly acquit ourselves of it ; being exact in all its parts and duties. Whoever proceeds so, is a true victim, which continually sacrifices itself to the will and pleasure

sure of God ; so that their whole life is a perpetual Sacrifice.

Each time we assist at Mass, we contract, as it were, a new obligation of living so, and of devoting ourselves entirely to God's service, and of conforming ourselves to his will in all our actions ; which is the fruit we should draw from Holy Mass, and the best return we can make for so incomparable a benefit.

To render this practice more easy, we may distinguish the four perpetual Sacrifices :

The first is a Holocaust.

The second, a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving.

The third of Impetration. And

The fourth of Propitiation.

Now the life of a good Christian ought to be a continual exercise of all those acts of virtue.

As to the first which is a Holocaust, in which the victim used to be entirely consumed by fire, God having given us our liberty, which is the precious thing we have to offer ; it is that victim we consume by fire when for the love of him, and the desire we have to content him, we give him the entire dominion we have over ourselves, actions, and goods ; not reserving to ourselves the choice of any of

our actions, nor of the circumstances that accompany them. It is not enough to present to God our labours, prayers, and fasts, or any other exercise, however good and holy, if they are not according to his will, and done both in the time and place he would have them, for otherways they will be of little or no merit in his sight; for if we reserve to ourselves the liberty of doing what actions we please, and when and how we please, God may reproach us as he did the Jews, who fasted by humour and inclination, that their fast was of no merit, because their own will was too much in it.

We should do well to question ourselves from time to time: saying, Am I in the place God would have me be in? Do I do what God would have me do? Be assured that the most excellent of all victims, is a perfect conformity of our judgment and will to the will of God. Great is the advantage religious persons have; for in exactly observing their vows, their rules, and the orders of their superiors, both by day and night, they thereby become perfect Holocausts, immolated each moment of their lives to the will and pleasure of God. They may say with Jesus Christ, that they are always employed in doing what is
pleasing

pleasing to God. And he will say of them, as of the Royal Prophet, *I have found a man according to my heart, who accomplishes all my wills.*

The second Sacrifice is of Thanksgiving. We should continually offer this Sacrifice to the Divine Majesty, since there is no moment of our lives in which we receive not some benefit from him.

In order to this we must reflect on those graces and favours, for which we are indebted to God's goodness; and acknowledge him the author of all the good we have, which he has given us for his service, offering him all we possess; and letting no occasion pass without contributing as much as is in our power, to the advancement of his glory, and the accomplishment of his designs.

We must even thank him for all the good actions we do, he having the greatest share in them: and for his being pleased to make use of us for the advancement of his glory, and for having helped us to merit heaven: for as St. Augustin observes, God crowns his own benefits when he rewards our merits.

The third Sacrifice is of Impetration. To offer this Sacrifice perpetually, we must persuade ourselves (as it is true) that of

ourselves we neither can do, nor succeed in any thing, without God's assistance. Which being, we must not fail to implore it each moment. If therefore we desire to offer his Divine Majesty this Sacrifice, we must have continually before our eyes our own miseries and weakneses, the many evils which oppress us, and the dangers we are exposed to; the goods we stand in need of, and our inability as to the procuring the one, or freeing ourselves from the other, which will force us continually to have recourse to God.

This we may perform in several manners, sometimes by pronouncing certain words, as *Deus in adjutorium, &c.* sometimes by forming in ourselves a desire of God's assistance; fixing the eyes of our soul upon him, from whom only we expect necessary forces, and strength to act. These short prayers and interior desires are victims, which breathe forth a more odori-ferous smell, than the perfumes which were formerly offered.

The revolt of our passions, the multitude of our temptations, the pain we find in labour, are as many admonitors to put us hourly in mind of exposing them to God; thereby to engage him to come to succour

succour us, and make us feel the effects of his mercies.

The fourth Sacrifice is that of Expiation, or Propitiation, which we ought also to offer perpetually. There is no Sacrifice which we should more frequently offer than this, we having in the bottom of our souls a source of sin, which even the just feel, and often every day they deplore the effects of it, and are obliged to have recourse to this Sacrifice to expiate them.

There are two things in sin, the guilt which is the offence of God, and the pain which is the chastisement it deserves. The Sacrifice of expiation includes both grief for and punishment of the fault. You will perpetually offer this Sacrifice, if as soon as you perceive yourself fallen into any sin, however small it be, you interiorly detest it, and mortify yourself in something; or at least in your examinations night and morning, if you not only grieve for the sins you have committed, but also impose some penance on yourself in satisfaction.

How holy would our life be, if, from morning to night, we employed ourselves in offering some of these Sacrifices. Sometimes making acts of conformity to the will of God, at other times thanking him for his benefits, then imploring his help,
and

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M O T I V E S

To excite us to the frequent

M E D I T A T I O N

Of our SAVIOUR's Passion.

A SOUL, redeemed with the Blood of Jesus Christ, should never pass a day without remembering and thanking his Divine Majesty for the incomparable benefit of our redemption, at least the day of the week, on which it was effected, should be consecrated to the remembrance of it. This great day was Friday, a day of all days the most afflicting to our dear Saviour, and the most beneficial to us; since then was offered in sacrifice the Life and Blood of God, to obtain the life and salvation of man. It was, and with reason, the dolefullest day that ever the world beheld, or the sun gave light unto; and should be to us a day dedicated to Love and Gratitude, for
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what our dear Saviour then did and suffered for us ; yet few there are who so much as entertain a serious thought of that immense Love of God, or who return one spark of love for so great a flame.

To move us, at least, to so holy and grateful a practice, let us consider the dignity of it, which appears by our Lord's recommending it to *St. Francis*, who begged of Almighty God to discover to him what exercise of Piety would be most pleasing to him ; and being inspired to take the Holy Scripture into his hands, and having several times opened and shut it, he always met with the History of our Saviour's Passion, which convinced him, that the meditation of Christ's suffering was more acceptable to God than any other exercise of Piety.

And, moreover, our Saviour exalts this exercise to the highest degree, since he so much esteems the Memory of his Passion, that, to the end it might be daily renewed, he instituted the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

A Second Motive to this Exercise, is the utility and advantage of it. For *St. Bonaventure* says that he, who devoutly employs himself in the Meditation of our Saviour's Life and Passion, will abundantly
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find all things necessary and useful for him ; so that he need seek no further. 'Tis a strong defence against temptations ; for if the Devil trembles at the painted image of the Cross of Christ, how much more will he be terrified to see it engraven in our souls by the continual Meditation of our Saviour's Passion ? 'Tis also a double wall against sin, for it raises fear, and creates love, both powerful motives to keep us from sin ; *Fear*, by seeing it punished and expiated with so great torments in the person of the Son of God, and *Love* for him, who has loved us to so great an excess, as to give his life for us ; how can we reflect on this and offend him any more !

The practice, of this Holy Exercise, will be of great comfort and advantage to us at the hour of death : for to die like a Christian, we must die in the embrace of Jesus Crucified, with what confidence will that person resign his soul in the wounds of his Lord, who has lived all his life in them by frequent contemplation ? Christ will then embrace that faithful soul, who in this life was mindful of his Passion. 'Tis a means also to avoid the pains of Purgatory, for

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there is nothing that can so readily quench those flames, as the blood of Christ, and his infinite satisfactions, which are applied to us by the remembrance of his Passion. It is recounted that a soul was preserved from Purgatory, for accustoming herself, whenever she saw a Crucifix, to beg for those bitter pains our Lord suffered at his death on the Cross, that he would free her from the pains of Purgatory.

Albertus Magnus affirms, that one simple and devout memory of our Saviour's sufferings, is more advantageous, and more pleasing to God, than daily disciplines to blood, the fasting a whole year with bread and water, or the reciting the whole Psalter every day. If so, what treasures of grace will they have laid up who have practised it many years; what peace of mind in life, and security at the hour of death!

Though there are many persons who content themselves with only conceiving the greatness of our Saviour's suffering, and feeling a singular compassion for them, in meditating on the Passion; yet that is not the only affection to be used, nor the only fruit to be gathered from
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the same; nevertheless it is the ground-work and foundation of the rest; since the more we conceive and compassionate our Lord's sufferings, the more we shall lament and detest sin, which has cost him so dear. We shall also thereby more visibly perceive the virtues he gives us example of, and be sensible, that the greatest patience is that which endures most; the greatest humility, that which is most depressed; the greatest meekness, that which is the most silent amidst the greatest wrongs; and the greatest obedience, that which submits to the hardest things; this shews that conceiving the greatness of our Saviour's pains, is the ground-work of the affections and fruit we should draw from the Meditation of his Passion.

Saint *Thomas* says, that laying aside the pains of the next world, which are those of Hell and Purgatory, Christ suffered the greatest, for none in this world ever have, or ever will endure so great; and this he proves by many reasons, but I shall only mention three of them.

The first is the greatness of his Charity, which was greater than can be ima-

gined or conceived ; this caused him most earnestly to desire the Glory of God, and the Salvation of men : and because the greater pains he endured for sin, the more fully he made atonement to God for them, and the more compleatly he redeemed man ; he would have his sufferings be excessive.

The second was the simple nature of his pains, which had no mixture of comfort or ease. Never any one in this life suffered such pains without some qualification or comfort, which rendered them more tolerable ; but our Saviour excluded all ways, by which he might find the least ease or comfort.

The third was the tenderness of his body ; which being the most perfect, and of the best constitution, was consequently more tender and sensible of pain than any other.

What do we owe his Divine Majesty for all he has done and suffered for us ? We certainly owe him all we are, or are capable of ; but since we have nothing of our own that is worth his acceptance, let us, at least, labour to make our lives entirely his, since he is all ours. And if we cannot every day, we may at least once

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a week, on the Friday, give ourselves to the consideration of what he has suffered for us.

The following Meditations, in which is contained our Saviour's Passion, may serve for that effect, using one of them at a time.

Six-and-Twenty Meditations of the Passion for Friday, which will suffice for Half a Year, and, if repeated, will compleat the whole Year.

I. MEDITATION.

CONSIDER that the Son of God, the evening before he suffered and died; in token of his infinite love, and to perpetuate the memory of his death and passion, left his body and blood, with his whole divinity, to be received by us in the Holy Eucharist. How does the greatness of his love, and his desire of being continually remembered by us, appear in this mystery? When lovers part, they give each other some tokens to refresh the memory; so our Saviour instituted this Divine Sacrament, that in his absence it

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might

might be a remembrance of his Holy Passion and Sacred Person; therefore when he instituted it he said, *Every time you do this, do it in remembrance of me*; that is, to remember how much I loved you; how much I valued you; and how much I suffered for you.

Thus his motive, in establishing this Holy Table, was purely, that by this stupendous food, and daily unbloody sacrifice, he might continually renew the memory of his precious death.

II. MEDITATION.

THE time our Saviour chose to prepare this delightful banquet was the night before his passion, when the greatest pains and sufferings in the world were preparing for him, when men were contriving his crucifixion and death; then he thought of bestowing himself entirely upon them, with his Divinity, and all the treasures of his power, wisdom, and goodness; his love for us could not bear a long absence, and therefore he invented this admirable way of remaining with us, that to him we might fly for refuge, invoke him in our necessities, and speak to him face to face,

face, when we are in distress; that his presence might stir up our devotion, increase our reverence, strengthen our hope, and enflame our love.

What thanks do we owe to our dear Saviour for all this? all we can say, or do for love of him, comes infinitely short of our debt: let us invite the Angels to bless, praise, and magnify his Divine Majesty for us; and let us beg of his infinite goodness, through the bowels of his mercy and love, that when he shall enter our hearts, he will be pleased to unite them to himself, so that they may never more be separated from him.

III. MEDITATION.

CONSIDER that our Lord having instituted the Blessed Sacrament, and left us a most convincing demonstration of his love, he retired into the garden to pray, and prepare himself for death, taking with him three of his Disciples, to whom he spoke these mournful words, *my Soul is sorrowful unto Death*. Then going a little aside from them, he with great recollection and reverence began to pray. He separated himself from his Disciples,

Disciples, and from all that might occasion distraction, for our example ; and kneeling on the ground, he prostrated with the greatest humility of body, but much more of soul, to adore his Eternal Father, and giving way to all the pains and sufferings of his passion, that they might seize upon his soul, before they tormented his body ; he was overwhelmed with grief and sadness, proceeding from the clear foresight, and natural apprehension of his approaching Passion, which was so great, that his soul endured such an anguish and agony, as none in the world had ever suffered. This appeared by the Blood which gushed out all over his Body ; and this strange sort of sweat, never before heard of in the world, was a token of the greatness of the inward Agony of his soul. As there was never such a sweat, so there was never so great a sorrow. The natural horror our Lord had of his Passion, must have been infinitely great to have caused it ! There are good Authors of opinion, that our Lord in that sweat lost more than ninety-seven thousand Drops of Blood.

IV. MEDITATION.

IV. MEDITATION.

SEE and behold, my soul, what a condition thy Lord is in for thee ! beset with so much anguish, struggling and fainting under the apprehensions of death, going and coming from the Disciples to the Eternal Father, and from the Eternal Father to the Disciples, and finding no comfort from either, he continues his prayer for three hours, begging his Father, that *if it were possible that cup might pass from him*. Here we may take notice, that he first says, *Father, to you all things are possible*. And after adds, *if it be possible, let this cup pass from me*. What could make this impossible to him, to whom all things are possible ? O ! it was only his love for us which made it so !

O extasy of love ! O stupendous effect of God's pity and compassion towards us ! he, to redeem a slave, has delivered up his only Son, that we might be delivered from the jaws of Satan, and pains of Hell ; though we did not ask it, yet for our sakes he refuses his most innocent Son what he petitions for himself with Sweat of Blood. And after this so great an effect of God's love, we are frightened
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from our duty to him by the least difficulty, and can take no pains for his sake, nor pray an hour, nor forgive an injury, nor resist a temptation, for love of him.

V. MEDITATION.

CONSIDER that after our Saviour's prayer was ended, there presently came a troop of armed men, and at the head of them *Judas*, who with a kiss betrayed his Divine Master. The Disciples ran away and abandoned his Sacred Person to that herd of bloody wolves, who set upon that spotless Lamb left alone in their power. Who can hear, without being moved with all the affections of love and grief, the barbarity with which they treated our dear Saviour! They bound his hands behind him with cords, and, after an inhuman manner, dragged him along the streets with a rope about his neck, some pulling him forwards, and others backwards with violence. What did our dear Lord suffer on this occasion! what pain, confusion, and disgrace! all which he willingly underwent for our sakes, offering himself a
Sacrifice

Sacrifice for our Salvation ; though, at the same time, he knew we would a thousand times betray him, who suffered such affronts for our love.

If his Disciples left and abandoned him, 'twas because of the danger they saw ; but we forsake him without the alarm of danger, and see the peril we run into, by departing from him. How much greater is our crime than theirs ! let us with a heart full of sorrow beg pardon for having ever left him, by offending him, and resolve to do so no more. Grant me, dear Lord, this favour, that I may ever remain fast bound to you, by all the duties of my state, and for Eternity, be never separated from you.

VI. MEDITATION.

CONSIDER how Christ having been taken in the garden, bound hand and foot, and his whole body loaden with chains, is presented before *Annas*, where he is accused of speaking arrogantly to the High Priest ; for which he receives a box on the ear, from a hand armed with a Gauntlet, which was no less

less painful, than injurious and affronting. The wicked High Priest, and all that were about him, scoffed and laughed to see our Lord so struck. Reflect a little who it is that is thus treated, as speaking arrogantly? 'Tis no less than God himself, King of kings, and Lord of lords, the wisdom of the Eternal Father; and shall so great a Majesty receive so injurious an affront for speaking to a vile wretched man, a Rakehell, guilty of all sorts of wickedness?

Admire, that the earth does not dissolve at so great a prodigy of impiety; that a thunderbolt does not crush that impious hand, and that the angels can suffer such an injury done to God! Admire again and again the infinite love of God, who binds his own hands with the chains of his love for us, that he might not revenge the injuries done to his Son! Admire still more his goodness in suffering you, who have so often buffeted him, and have so little profited by so great an example of Patience, as not to be able to suffer the least injury, slight, or affront, for his sake.

VII. MEDITATION.

VII. MEDITATION.

CONSIDER how *Annas* and *Caiaphas*, with all their wicked crew, being retired to take their rest, Christ is so far from being allowed to take any, that he is committed to the rabble rout of Soldiers, to serve them for sport. Here reflect, that the Eternal Wisdom of God is become the sport of wicked men; he is mocked and scoffed at the whole night, by those impious wretches, for so *St. Luke* relates, saying, *that same night the Soldiers that guarded him, scoffing at him, covered his face; and striking him said, Prophecy to us, O Christ, who it was that struck thee? and many Blasphemies they uttered against him.* We may imagine what a night our Saviour had among those savage Executioners, whose cruelty cannot be conceived; nor will it ever be known till the day of judgment, what our Saviour suffered that night. If a stranger we never saw, or heard of before, if a thief, if a murderer, should be so unworthily and cruelly treated, we should be moved with compassion; and shall we not compassionate our dear Redeemer, who has suffered such unworthy things

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for

for us? We ought to fill all places with our sighs and groans; but, O great ingratitude! so far we are from this, that we easily forget so great a prodigy of suffering love!

Consider moreover how, whilst this was acting, *St. Peter* denied our Lord. What a wound was this to the heart of Jesus! How deeply did it afflict him! Far more than all he suffered besides. Yet how often do we deny our Divine Master? As often as we voluntarily offend him. If after looking on our Crucified Saviour, it happens to us as it did to *St. Peter*, that our Lord looks on us by his interior grace, let us, with *St. Peter*, weep bitterly; for how can we behold him in that sad condition without tears?

VIII. MEDITATION.

CONSIDER how, that dismal night being past and morning now come, they hurry our Lord, bound with ropes, to *Pilate*, and then to *Herod*, and then to *Pilate* again; all which way his Divine Majesty went with exceeding weariness of body, by reason of the torments

torments of the past night, and want of sleep. Both before *Pilate* and *Herod*, he was continually accused by the Jews, but none of their accusations were found true. Then there rose up other witnesses against him, more powerful than the former, and they procured his death; but who could they be? Alas! none but ourselves, who continually accuse him by sinning: for, he being our bail, we make him guilty of death, by those crimes which make us so; thus he, though truly innocent as to any crime of his own, makes himself guilty by taking ours upon him; and therefore he held his peace and was silent, because he could not refute this accusation; which silence made him pass for a fool or madman in Herod's court; and did we not know him to be the wisdom of the Eternal Father, his judgment might be called in question, for undergoing what we see him suffer for ungrateful man.

Whilst you consider him in this condition, imagine you hear him say to you: Dost thou consider what I have done for thee? Thou callest me the Word of God, and the Eternal Wisdom, and I am so;

if then I have chosen to be contemned and despised in this world for thee, oughtest not thou to do the same for me? See what your practice has hitherto been, if conformable to his example or no, and what you resolve it shall be for the future.

IX. MEDITATION.

CONSIDER how *Pilate*, to content our Lord's accusers, commanded he should be scourged, thinking by this means to appease the rage of his enemies. With what horror was not our dear Lord struck, when he heard the sentence of his flagellation? May we not think he sweat Blood again with the terror of it? Yet he submitted to it. No sooner was this cruel order given, but the executioners laid hold of him. What spectacle of horror could exceed this! His hands tied behind his back, he is violently hurried away by two or three hangmen, the rods and whips are prepared, they strip him naked and tie him to a pillar, and then begin, with a hellish rage, to discharge their lashes and stripes upon his delicate body, and tear his

his most pure flesh, adding scourges to scourges, and wounds to wounds, so that he received more than five thousand strokes; which flagellation was beyond example bloody and cruel. We could not have the heart to beat a dog after that manner, how then can we be so hard-hearted as to consider our Saviour so barbarously treated, and not shed one tear?

X. MEDITATION.

LET us more attentively consider this cruel Spectacle, and view our dear Saviour's body all in a gore blood, and his flesh torn from his bones. What a sight is it to see the Lord of the creation tied to a pillar and whipped like a malefactor! What can this mean, my God! What punishment is this? What crimes have you committed, my Lord, to be thus scourged? Ha! it is plain that my sins are the cause; for having taken upon him my debts, he is liable to the payment due for them.

Draw near to his Divine Majesty, and imagine that whilst he suffers this for you, he says to you: *Will there never, do you*

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think,

think, be wounds enough? It is in your power to prevent any more. With eyes full of tears, and a heart full of compassion, bewail your impieties; weep over your ingratitude, and wash the wounds of your dear Saviour with tears of compunction, for he expects it from you. Then consider what return you have made him; and if none, deplore your ingratitude, and think what you will do hereafter. Shall a light fear (as it has done) hinder you from fulfilling his will, when so great a horror did not hinder him from procuring your salvation?

XI. MEDITATION.

CONSIDER that our Saviour's flagellation was no sooner ended but another, not less painful torture, was practised on him; to wit, the crowning him with thorns. The Evangelist says, that after they had tormented our Lord with stripes, the soldiers came to scoff and jeer at our Saviour's sufferings, and plaiting a crown of thorns, they pressed it on his sacred head; many of the thorns broke (as *St. Bernard* says) in entering his head, and many pierced his scull, and touched his

his brain. And they put on his shoulders a soldier's coat, instead of the purple robe then used by kings; and having given him a reed for a scepter, by way of mockery and derision, they bowed their knees and saluted him, as a mock king, a king of beggars and fools; then they buffeted him and spit in his face, and taking the reed out of his hand, they struck him with it on his head, saying, *Hail King of the Jews.*

It is hard to decide whether the pain our Saviour suffered on this occasion, or the affront put on him were the greater; but both shew the greatness of his love, which not satisfied with his dying of any sort of death, would chuse the most bitter and ignominious one that could be imagined: For, if we observe, we shall find that each torment our Saviour suffered was always accompanied with some great humiliation, to signify to us, that sufferings and humiliations are the two individual pieces of our Saviour's Cross which are never to be separated, for the one without the other makes no Cross; and we are always endeavouring to separate them; we are willing to suffer, if no humiliation attends it; but if humiliations are added to what we suffer, we cannot bear it. Let

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us remember that sufferings without humiliation, is not Christ's Cross, but only a part of it; but both together make it entire, and humiliation is the chief piece of it.

XII. MEDITATION.

CONSIDER how *Pilate*, desirous to release our Saviour, whom he judged innocent, being sensible it was only the envy of his enemies which made them seek his death, for that effect exposed our Lord in the lamentable condition the soldiers had reduced him to, thinking that the very sight of him would be enough to quell their fury.

Let us endeavour to be present in spirit at that doleful spectacle, and attentively observe our dear Redeemer: See with what shame and confusion he stands before that multitude; his hands bound; a garment of scorn on his shoulders; a crown of sharp thorns upon his head, and a reed in his hand; his body all torn and running with gore blood; his face swelled with buffets; deformed with spittle and covered with blood, which ran from his sacred pierced head; for having his hands bound, he

he could not wipe off the blood which trickled down his face; his eyes were blood-shot and almost blind; in fine, such was his aspect, that he scarce looked like a Man, notwithstanding this dismal sight did not move his enemies to compassion.

XIII. MEDITATION.

BEHOLD, my soul, your God! See to what a condition his love for you has brought him that he might satisfy, in his own person, for your sins, and suffer the punishment due for them. If you ask him who it was that crowned him with that dolorous diadem? He will answer you, Behold the Man, yourself, your pride and desire of appearing. If, who put that ragged garment on his shoulders? Behold the Man, yourself, by your luxury and love of fine apparel. If, who put the reed into his hand? Behold the Man, yourself, by your unsteadiness in good, and inconstancy in your resolutions to serve him. If, who tore and rent his Sacred Body? Behold the Man, yourself, by your detracting tongue, and lessening the reputation and good name of others.

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O my God ! Must those sins which I have committed so easily and lightly cost you so much ? Was so great a penalty due to me for them ? Yes, my soul, while we were sporting in the streets of Babylon, sentence of death was pronounced against us in the Royal Chamber ; whereupon the only begotten Son of God, casting away his diadem, with ashes sprinkled on his head, barefoot, and weeping, went to the place of execution, and offered himself to die instead of his Servant. What an excess of goodness ! And shall we, after this, still mock and scoff at his tears ? Shall we, with the perfidious Jews, give sentence against him by our sins ? Crying, with them, *Take him away and crucify him !*

Be confounded ! and falling at his feet, beg pardon for having ever done it, and resolve, with his Grace, never to do so any more ; but to make *him* for the future the only object of your Love, and your only recourse in distress. When in affliction, say to yourself, Behold the Man, who is the only one that can comfort me. When attacked with fear, say, Behold the Man, in whom I trust and confide, and will ever do so. In sufferings
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and pains think on his, and unite yours with them; and so likewise in all difficulties have recourse to that God-man, and keep close to him for time and for eternity.

XIV. MEDITATION.

CONSIDER how our Lord was exposed to the view of the people in that deplorable condition, together with *Barrabbas*, that they might chuse one of them to be freed from death. What an affront and contempt of our Saviour, to compare him with a wicked thief, and much greater was it to prefer the thief before him! Admire the impiety of the Jews, and still more your own. The Jews knew him not for what he was, or they would never have done as they did; but we who know and profess him to be God, do, notwithstanding, daily prefer our wicked desires and affections before him. But, above all, let us admire the inscrutable abyss of God's love, which preferred our salvation to the welfare of his only Son, who is of such infinite value that Eternity contains nothing so precious! and since he would be so humbled for us, let
us

us promise him that, from henceforward, we will love and prefer him before all things, and will be content, for his sake, to be postponed to those that are inferior to us.

XV. MEDITATION.

CONSIDER how the Jews having chosen *Barrabbas*, and desired Christ should be crucified, the judge condemned him in these words: *I Pontius Pilate condemn thee Jesus to be hanged upon a Cross.* Our Saviour hearing the sentence given by the wicked judge, immediately put himself on his knees (as *St. Bonaventure* relates) and received it kneeling, to shew his obedience and submission to the will of his Father. Behold here, on the one side, the judge sitting on a tribunal, a place raised above the rest, and on the other side the Lord of Majesty upon his knees! How comes Majesty to be reduced so low? Ah, it is because the servant had committed high treason against his God, and was to have been punished with eternal death, unless his Lord would satisfy, in his own person, for his offences! Can we, after this, doubt of God's love
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for us, and desire of our salvation? Let us banish such ungrateful thoughts, and putting our trust and confidence in him, beg, as well as confide, that since he would undergo the sentence of death for our salvation, he will not condemn us to eternal death, which we justly deserve for our offences.

XVI. MEDITATION.

CONSIDER how, as soon as the sentence was given, they immediately brought forth the Cross, which was very weighty, and laid it on his shoulders all torn with stripes. This was a cruelty never practised towards any, to load an unhappy man with the gibbet on which he was to be executed; yet this they do to our dear Saviour, who receives and embraces it, as the altar on which he is to be sacrificed for the glory of his Eternal Father and our salvation; and though he knew that his strength was so spent with what he had suffered, and the loss of so much blood, that he should sink under the weight of it; yet he does not refuse it, to give us example not to refuse, under any
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pretence, to carry the Cross God requires we should carry.

Let us, my soul, follow our dear Saviour in this painful proceſſion, and remember that he once ſaid, *If any one will come after me, let him deny himſelf, and take up his Croſs and follow me.* It is what we cannot, in gratitude, reſuſe to do for his ſake, while we behold him falling under the weight of the Croſs he carries for us; and at the ſame time know, that the burden and weight of our ſins is much heavier to him than his Croſs. With what pains and difficulty, being come to the foot of Mount Calvary, does he aſcend it! How was his ſacred feet cut with the ſharpneſs of that craggy rock? How many horrible ſhakes did the Croſs give to his crown of thorns, renewing all the wounds of his ſacred head.

XVII. MEDITATION.

CONSIDER how, being come to the top of the hill, they took off his Croſs but not his Crown. Then ſtripping him naked for the third time, they renewed all his former wounds, and made the blood gush out aſreſh. What a ſad ſpectacle

spectacle was it to see all our Saviour's body torn from head to foot, and in a gore blood ! in the meanwhile the other executioners were employed in preparing nails, cords, &c. and boring holes in the Cross, and digging a pit to plant it in. All things being ready for his crucifixion, it is probable some of his executioners, less barbarous than the rest, might say to him, Come, poor man, it is time to put an end to thy miserable life, lay thee down upon this bed prepared for thee. Others, more cruel, take hold of him and fling him down upon the Cross. What heart can behold this and not burst with grief ? What, may we imagine, might be the thoughts and affections that possess the heart of our dear Redeemer, when he lay stretched out upon the Cross. What ought to be ours in beholding him so ?

XVIII. MEDITATION.

CONSIDER how, though Christ had already given such great and unquestionable proofs of his love for us ; yet, lest we should doubt of it, he would confirm it by this prodigy of love, writing us all in his hands. See with what pen

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and ink the names of all mankind are written there. The nails are the pens and his blood the ink, and he is pleased to retain the characters, and to have them before his eyes, in memory of us, for all eternity.

Reflect attentively with what pain to our dear Saviour these characters were written in his Crucifixion. His Divine Majesty being stretched on the Cross as on a rack: they first take his right hand, and placing it on the hole, before made for it, in the Cross, they nail it to the same by several strokes of a hammer.

The pain, caused by this wound, made all the nerves and sinews of his body shrink up towards the hand that was nailed and drew the body after them. Our Lord's body being thus drawn to that side, the cruel executioners laying hold of the other hand to make it reach to the prepared hole, were forced to stretch it with such violence, that all the bones of our Saviour's breast were drawn from their places. Imagine what pain he suffered, and what streams of blood issued from both his hands, which were bored through with such vast great nails: But when they came to his feet, what force, what violence

lence were they fain to use to make them descend to the holes designed for them ! And being nailed with the like great nails, a river of blood ran from them.

The pains our Saviour endured in his Crucifixion were likely the greatest of all his passion. Speak, what Love and Compassion shall move you too.

XIX. MEDITATION.

CONSIDER how, he being now crucified, there remains only to lift up the Cross and plant it in the pit prepared for it. O executioners, spare a little this afflicted man, this man of do-lours ! and do not shake him too roughly, for the least motion will cause him a new martyrdom. But alas ! They are so far from having any consideration of what he suffers, that not content with rudely dragging the Cross along, they let it fall into the pit, with such impetuosity, and so violent a jolt, that it was revealed to Saint *Mechtilda*, our Lord never suffered so sensible a pain, during the whole course of his Passion, as he did then.

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Stay

Stay here, my soul, and prostrate embrace the feet of thy dying Saviour, and mingling thy tears with his precious blood, say to him, with a heart full of contrition, O adorable Saviour, how can I live when my sins have caused your death? O great God, merciful Redeemer! pardon me my offences, and have mercy on me. Grant me this favour, I conjure you, by the blood which flows from all your wounds; receive me into your favour, and give me the grace rather to die than ever voluntarily offend you more.

XX. MEDITATION.

CONTEMPLATE, my soul, thy God and Saviour in the greatest necessity, in the greatest poverty, having not a rag to cover him, nor a drop of water to quench his burning thirst; in the greatest infamy, the Cross being, in those times, the punishment only of thieves and notorious malefactors; in the greatest sorrow, for the interior grief he suffered in his soul far surpassed the pain he suffered in his body.

Thus

Thus he hangs three hours, till death, not able in the least to give any ease to his body, it being only supported by nails, and the longer it hangs, becomes still heavier, and naturally sinks downwards, so rending and tearing the nerves to the increase of his excessive pains. Yet he is God, and for thy sake reduced to such cruel straits:

What have we hitherto done or suffered for him, and what shall we resolve for the future?

XXI. MEDITATION.

CONSIDER how the time being come when his Divine Majesty would render his last breath, he bowed down his Sacred Head; his eyes, sunk with excess of pain, begin to close; his lips, from whence proceed the words of Eternal Life, become cold; and his face is covered with a mortal wanness!

At this very time, when it is usual for others to lose the use of speech, fortified by his own virtue, he raises his head, opens his eyes, and fixing them on heaven, he says, with a loud voice, *Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit.*

Thus

Thus he ended his life, and the work of our redemption; for bowing down his head to shew his perfect submission, and opening his Sacred Mouth, he gave up the Ghost.

But, dear Saviour! look on me before you expire, and hearken to my petitions. Give me your Cross, for since it was dear to you it shall be so to me: grant me your Love, that I may continually sigh after you; and let me never want tears to bewail your sufferings and my sins: yes, my God, I desire that your Cross, your Love, and my Tears, may be the nourishment of my soul.

XXII. MEDITATION.

REFLECT that there is always great regard had to the words of a dying man; how much more ought there to be to the words of a dying God? We should always keep them in mind, and attentively study them.

The first and second words our Saviour spoke were in favour of his enemies, begging pardon for them, and promising heaven to the good thief; in which he shews

shews himself to be a God of infinite mercy and goodness.

Nothing is so hard to nature as to forgive an enemy, especially an enemy whose malice will deprive us of life; yet this our dear Saviour did, and we must all do the like; forgiving from our heart, whether asked or not asked, whatever injury has been done us, or offence given us.

The third word was to recommend us all to his blessed Mother, in the person of *St. John*, saying, *Woman, behold your Son*; and to *St. John*, *Behold your Mother*. What a legacy does our dear Saviour leave us! What a gift does he give us! His own Mother to be ours! The Sacred Virgin, in whom is contained all the perfections of the Angels and Saints. Nothing more precious could he possibly give; for when he gave us all to her, in the person of Saint *John*, he doubtless gave her the tenderness of a Mother for us all; that we may become more worthy of that honour, we must imitate Saint *John* in our Love and Respect towards her, and in making our Recourse to her as to a Mother.

XXIII. MEDITATION.

THE fourth word was, *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?* This of all other sufferings was the greatest, and most sensible to our dear Saviour. He could not but complain of his being left and abandoned by his heavenly Father; and his complaint was, as if he should say, that the world should abandon me, whose practices I ever condemned, is not to be wondered at; nor that my Disciples should forsake me through fear; but that you, my Father, whose Glory I ever sought, and whose will I ever obeyed, should forsake me, is what infinitely afflicts me: What lesson for us! let us never forget it, nor our obligation to our dear Saviour, who would be forsaken by his Eternal Father, that we might not be eternally abandoned by him. O Eternal Lord God! you never punish the same crimes twice, and since you have punished my sins in the person of your dear Son, do not chastise them eternally in me, but give me the grace to bewail them during my whole Life.

The fifth word our Lord spoke was, *I Thirst*. Though our Saviour suffered a prodigious corporal thirst, yet it was not that heat



heat he complained of; its exceeding violence did not affect him so much as the thirst he had of our Salvation and Sanctification. Since then, my soul, it was this he complained of, it is in our power, with his grace, to solace him, by seriously tending to the perfection of the holy state he has called us to.

XXIV. MEDITATION.

THE sixth word was, *All is consummated.* Our dear Saviour said it, because he saw he had nothing more to accomplish, neither of the Prophets predictions of him, his Father's orders, nor his own heart's desires. He had abandoned his Humanity to the power of love; and love could exact no more of it, yet he died in the ardor of his interior thirst; that is, in a burning desire to see all men profit by his Passion and Death; and we are more cruel than the Jews, if we do not solace him, by forsaking our sins, following his examples, and loving him with all our heart.

The seventh and last word was, *Father, into your Hands I commend my Spirit.* Join your voice with that of your most amiable Saviour, and both living and dying say

say often with him, my God and my Father, I commend my soul into your hands ; take it from the hands of my enemies, for it is an only one to me, and you know that your Divine Son, at his last gasp, recommended it to you with his own blessed soul.

XXV. MEDITATION.

The Taking of our Saviour down from the Cross.

CONSIDER how the cruel Jews, not content with having tortured our Lord whilst living, also vented their rage on him when dead, by piercing his side with a spear : This was the utmost barbarity in them ; but our dear Saviour turned it all to our advantage.

1st, Pouring out Blood and Water from that Sacred Wound, to wash and baptize the whole world.

2dly, Shedding thus the last Drop of his Blood for our Salvation ; for there yet remained some in his heart. And

3dly, To open a window to his Sacred heart, through which we might penetrate to it, and see the heart of God wounded for

for us, with this inscription in it, *God is dead for Love of you.*

Enter, my soul, into this Ark of security, by the passage which is opened to thee in his most Holy side ; let it be thy receptacle, thy constant habitation, thy Temple to pray in, and thy heaven to rest in for ever. Fly to his Sacred Wounds whenever tempted, afflicted, or troubled.

Before they bury our Lord, approach once more in Spirit, and contemplate the Author of Life, dead for thee ; see what a deplorable Condition his body is in, wounded from head to foot ; and then reflect, with *St. Bernard*, what must the wounds of our soul have been, that Christ should be thus wounded for us ! The Angels of peace weep bitterly in beholding him, and all Creatures bewail his death as Author of their being : let us do the same, and that, if possible, with tears of Blood, since we have been the unhappy cause thereof.

XXVI. MEDITATION.

CONsider with how great Compassion and Devotion the Holy Men draw the nails, and take from the Cross our Sa-
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viour's Sacred Body. *St. Bonaventure* says upon this subject, O amiable Passion, O delightful Death ! If I had been the wood of the Cross, and the hands and feet of my God had been nailed upon me, I would have said to those Holy Men, who took him down from the Cross, do not separate me from my Lord, but bury me with him, that I may never be separated from him. But what I cannot do with my Body, I will do with my heart ; O how good is it to be with Jesus Crucified ! I will make three dwellings in him, one in his hands, one in his feet, and a perpetual one in his precious side ; there I will rest, repose, sleep, and pray ; there I will speak to his heart, and he will grant me all I shall ask. O amiable wounds of our merciful Redeemer ! As I was entering once into them with my eyes open, the blood that gushed from them took away my sight ; and when I could see nothing but blood, I entered further, feeling about, and found myself so entangled in them, that I can get out no more ; in them I dwell, by their food I am maintained, I drink of their precious Liquor, which is so sweet, that I can neither express nor comprehend it. I fear to come out of this delightful mansion, and lose

lose the comfort in which I live ; but I firmly hope that, since his wounds are always open, I shall get in again, and make them my constant habitation. O blessed spear, and blessed nails, that opened to us the way of life ! Were I the point of that spear, I would desire never to come out of that Divine Breast, and would say, This is my rest for ever, here I will dwell, for I have chosen this dwelling for my habitation. Thus far *St. Bonaventure*.

Now turning our eyes a while from the Son, let us fix them on his Blessed Mother, who was present at all he suffered. What did her heart feel, to see with her own eyes the torments he endured, as well in soul as in body ? Sinking under extreme anguish, partly for the present pains he suffered, and partly for that they would prove useless to many of those he suffered for : in all which she could no ways solace him. Here her soul was pierced with a profound sorrow, and here she beheld the immensity of God's goodness, and the greatness of his Justice.

What a sword of sorrow pierced her soul, when she received him dead into her arms, and beheld all his wounds ! The grief of this sorrowful Mother was so great,

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that

that she is worthily called the Queen of Martyrs; for she loved her dear Son a thousand times better than her own life; she would willingly have died in his place, and her sense of sorrow and compassion was so great, that *St. Bernardin* says, If the hearts of all men should split with a sense of our Saviour's Passion, her's would equal all the rest, though they died with grief. How great then must her's have been!

A Preparation for Communion, drawn from the Consideration of our Lord's Death and Burial.

NO one can doubt but that, of all other Preparations, it is the most suitable to our Lord's design, since he commands us to do it in memory of his Death; and his Apostle declares, that the death of our Redeemer is announced by receiving Communion; for he says, *As often as you shall eat this bread, and drink this Chalice, you shall shew forth the Death of our Lord.*

The Sacrifice of Mass being the same Sacrifice as that of the Cross, only with this difference, that *That* was offered to the Eternal Father in a bloody Manner, and *This* in an unbloody Manner; it is truly a Monument and Commemoration
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of our Lord's Passion; and in it is represented his Death and Passion. Nay his Burial and Sepulchre are not less represented in the Communion of the Priest, as well as in the other Communicants; therefore each should endeavour to render himself a neat and well-adorned sepulchre for Christ, by means of those virtues which the sepulchre either had or would have had, if it had been endowed with reason.

Now for the practice, which may be divided into two parts, the remote and the nearer preparation. As to the first, being persuaded that as often as we communicate, we become the living sepulchre of our Lord; for that end we must apply ourselves to the exercise of piety, thereby to build a decent Sepulchre for our Saviour in the bottom of our hearts. A soul devoted to Christ Crucified, who has so often the honour to receive him in her heart, where he reposes as in his Grave, which he stains with the Vermilion of his Precious Blood, can do no less than dedicate herself wholly to him; endeavouring to adorn herself with rich Ornaments, fit for a Tomb to receive her God. The task is great, it being to prepare a dwelling, not for an earthly King, but for the great God of heaven and earth. *Solomon*, the wisest

of men, did not think seven years too much to build a Temple for the Ark of the covenant; and can we then think any time too much to prepare a place where God himself is to repose? Let us then adorn our souls, for this effect, not only seven years, but as long as we live. Did we make this our practice, as *St. Aloysius* did, what grace should we not obtain. He consecrated the whole week to this exercise. The three first days he employed in thanksgiving for the Blessed Sacrament he had received on Sunday, and the three following days in making Preparation for the next.

In order to this, we must make it our first thought in the morning, and our last over-night, to prepare in our heart a worthy Sepulchre for our dear Saviour, who, being dead for us, is desirous to repose in our hearts, as in his Grave and Sepulchre. Let us therefore be solicitous to adorn our hearts in the manner which may make them most agreeable to him. When we rise in the morning, and in time of our prayer, let us think what ornaments we may get that day, in order to it; and at night in our Examen, let us see what we have got, and be truly sorry if we have polluted

polluted our heart by sin, resolving, as much as possible, to avoid all sort of sin on that account, begging God's grace for the future. During the day, let us embrace all occasions of adorning it, performing our prayer with fervour and devotion, being ready in occasions to practise humility, patience, obedience, charity, &c. and never slipping any opportunity, by which we may embellish it. We must also polish its roughness by means of mortification, to render it more acceptable; and the history of our Saviour's sufferings should be engraven therein, which will be so, if we frequently call them to mind, especially during the Mass that precedes our Communion, in which we ought to contemplate his death, represented by the same, and dispose our heart to become his decent sepulchre.

*Reflections to raise Affections for the Pur-
gative Way.*

ON these words: *He was laid in a Monument, wherein never yet any had been laid.* Consider, that if the Sepulchre, in which Christ was laid, had before been filled with foul carcases, and if it had
been

been endued with reason, what thoughts it would have had of its baseness, unworthiness, and indignity? It would doubtless have acknowledged that it was entirely unworthy of so great a Majesty; it would have extremely grieved that it had ever been polluted with such filthy guests; it would have wished for fountains of tears to wash away its odours; and as those tears could not produce a purity, fit for so great a guest, unless mixed with the Precious Blood of that Divine Saviour, it would have begged that favour of him. And encouraged by his kind inviting all to come and draw waters with joy from his fountains! it would doubtless have conceived a great desire of those waters, mixed with confidence, reverence, and ardent desires to be wholly *His*, who so lovingly makes the invitation.

Second Reflections for the Purgative Way.

ON these words: *They took the Body of Jesus, and bound it in linen clothes, with spices.* Consider how, before our Saviour's Body was laid in the Sepulchre, it was imbalmed with perfumes, and
spices,

spices, and myrrh : We must do the same, when we receive the holy Eucharist ; for this myrrh signifies penance and a detestation of sin, with which we should anoint our Lord's Body, all covered over with wounds, before we lay him in the Sepulchre of our heart. Then, being informed interiorly by him that he received those wounds in our house, we must grieve heartily for it, and with tears, proceeding both from compassion for our Saviour's sufferings, and compunction for our sins, the unhappy cause of them, we must wash those Sacred Wounds. And as by our sins we have not only wounded Christ, but ourselves also with grievous wounds, which nothing can cure but the sovereign Balsam that distills from our Saviour's wounds, let us go with an ardent desire to receive that Precious Blood by holy Communion, to the end it may cure all our wounds ; begging and confiding that Christ, the true and charitable Samaritan, will effectually heal them, provided we put no obstacle.

Reflection

Reflection to raise Affections for the Illuminative Way.

ON these words: *They laid him in a Monument that was hewed out of a Rock.* Reflect, that if the Sepulchre of Christ, being hewed out of a Rock, stood in need of polishing to render it more compleat, it would certainly have been extremely ashamed, had it been sensible of the greatness of the Guest it was to lodge, to see itself so vile and unpolished, in the presence of so great a Majesty. It would have wished to have been adorned with the purest gold, and most precious stones, to be thereby more worthy to receive so great a Lord. Then reflecting that those ornaments might be procured from the infinite liberalities of that Lord, it would have poured forth a thousand petitions for the obtaining thereof.

It would moreover have acknowledged that, being a stone, it was not capable of those due expressions of love, admiration, praise, and gratitude, yet it would have made the best acts of adoration and thanksgiving it could. It would have discovered to its beloved Guest all its defects,

defects, and would have conceived great hopes of obtaining a remedy for them, because it was never heard, that our Saviour in his life-time lodged with any, whom he did not liberally reward with his gifts. It would earnestly have begged of Christ, that, since he consecrated all things by his touch, he would do the same now to his present habitation, intreating him to polish and embellish it so, that it might be more worthy of his presence.

Second Reflections for the Illuminative Way.

ON these words: *And he laid him in his own Monument.* Consider, that in Holy Communion, we do the same that *Joseph of Arimathea* did; we lay our Lord in our own Monument, for our Bodies are but a living Tomb for our souls; therefore when we receive him thus into our bodies, it is burying him in the same Sepulchre with our souls. Reflect on the vileness of your body, scarce worthy to lodge your soul, and humble yourself exceedingly in the presence of so great a Majesty, who is pleased to enter so unworthy an habitation.

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At the 1st. *Domine non sum Dignus*, think, or say, Lord, I am unworthy, because you are God, and I a poor creature, between whom there is an infinite distance.

At the 2d. Say, I am so, because you are infinitely great, and I a poor worm, deservedly reputed among the vilest; the daughter of rottenness, and sister of worms.

At the 3d. Say, I am unworthy, because you are infinitely holy, and I a sinner, who by my sins have made myself worse than any creature, how vile soever. After this move yourself to hope and confidence, not grounded on your own merits, but on the merits of Christ, and his infinite clemency. Then listen to his Divine voice, who says, *Come to me, all ye that labour, and I will refresh you. My delights are to be with the children of men.*

Let your soul melt with love, and desire of your beloved; say, Lord, if your delights are to be with me, mine, by your grace, shall be to be with you; and when you possess him in your heart, expose to him all your maladies, weakneses, and infirmities, for which end lay your heart
upon

upon his heart, and conjure him, by all that is most holy, to grant you a heart according to his.

*Reflections to raise Affections for the
Unitive-Way.*

Joseph of Arimathea taking down the body, wrapt it in a clean sindon. The Communicant is not only the Sepulchre of Christ, but becomes the very Sindon, or sheet, he was wrapt in. If that sheet had had reason and sense as you have, with what affections would it have been moved, when it was to have the happiness of embracing the Sacred Body of its Lord, who had died for all, and would stain it with the same blood he had shed for that effect.

Although it had been clean, yet, considering that there could be no cleanliness worthy of such a Guest, it would have wished for the purity of Angels; and if it had perceived any spot, it would immediately have washed it out with tears of compunction. After which, it would have unfolded itself with most inflamed desires of enjoying so great a good, and in expectation of that happiness, it would have bedewed his Sacred feet with continual

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tears;

tears ; praised him with a most eloquent silence, and often, in sweet whispers, have breathed forth these words : *Quia Amore Languet*. When it had got possession of that heavenly treasure, it would have kissed and embraced all our Redeemer's wounds, especially that of his Sacred side, and have drawn flowing waters from those sacred fountains of love ; which practice Saint *Chrysostome* particularly recommends, affirming that every communicant, as often as he frequents the sacred mysteries of the body of Christ, ought to believe that he goes to the wound of his side, to suck his most sweet and precious blood. Let us beg that, for the future, we may love him alone, who has loved us to such an excess as to give his blood and life for us.

Second Reflections for the Unitive Way.

AND they rolled a great stone to the door of the monument. This was the last ceremony they performed at the sepulchre, and it was to prevent any one's entering and stealing away the treasure that lay in it. It is what we should do as often as we go to communion ; we should lock up all

all the gates of our senses, and especially our hearts, that having received our Lord, nothing may enter in to steal him from us. Then we should lay a great stone at the door of our heart, by a firm and strong resolution, that upon no occasion we will ever suffer that Sacred treasure to be taken from us. Grieve heartily, that you have ever permitted, not only your senses, but your heart also, to wander from him, and to be led away by affection to creatures. Acknowledge and confess to his Divine Majesty, that there is nothing in creatures, in which you can find rest; and promise that you will no more seek any but in him, in whom alone it is to be found.

Having diligently shut up the gates of our senses to all created things, we must open our heart to a fervent desire of him who only can fill and satisfy it. Our dear Saviour invites us to come to him, by these words: *Come all you that thirst, to the fountains of water, &c. If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. Say then to him, as the Samaritan did: Give me, O Lord, of this water, that I may drink, and never thirst more. Offer him to the Eternal Father, in thanksgiving*

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for the infinite benefit of the Holy Eucharist, the body and blood of his beloved Son; for no oblation can be more divine nor more grateful to him.

Then turning to our Divine Saviour, we must kiss his wounds, and inebriate our souls with the promised waters, hearkening to him, who assures us, that he is all ours, and asks us when we will be all his. Nothing hinders him from being all ours, neither Heaven, nor his Divinity, nor the Gibbet of the Cross: what can hinder us from being all his? Let us resolve for the future that nothing shall, saying from the bottom of our heart: My Lord and my God! since you are pleased to be all mine, I desire the grace to be entirely yours. And whose should I be but my Creator's and Redeemer's, who has so many rights over me, and to whom I totally owe myself? Then let us bid adieu to all creatures, and dedicate ourselves wholly to the good-will and pleasure of God.

As our Lady was present at the Sepulchre, and, with her advice and Sacred hands, assisted *Joseph* and the rest in burying her Divine Son; so when in Communion we are making the mystical Sepulchre

pulchre of Christ, we must beg her assistance that we may perform that great work well, and endeavour in it to imitate her example. Our blessed Lady washed his Sacred wounds with her tears, she kissed and embraced them, embalming him with all kinds of perfumes, especially with the Balsam of an ardent love. All this we must endeavour to imitate, washing with our tears, not only his Sacred wounds, but also the wounds of our soul : weeping for our sins, the unhappy cause of them both, and with a tender love kissing and embracing our dear Lord's feet. But if the sweet perfumes of virtues fail us, let us beg our Lady to supply our wants, by lending us some of her's to embalm her Divine Son's Body. Then let us offer to Christ those virtues of his most blessed Mother, wishing it were in our power to anoint his Sacred Body with all manner of spices and perfumes ; begging his Divine Majesty, for his own and his Sacred Mother's merits, to fix our hearts so in his love, that nothing may withdraw us any more from him.

FOUR MEDITATIONS

UPON THE

MOTIVES

*We have to love and honour our LADY ;
which may serve for each Saturday of the
Month.*

I. MEDITATION.

1st **P**RELUDE. Imagine you see our Lady seated on a Throne of great glory, at the right hand of her Son ; surrounded with Angels, announcing her praises, and reverencing her as the Mother of God, and their Queen.

2^d Prelude. Beg the grace to be sensible of the many motives you have to love and honour her, and that you may effectually shew your sentiments in her regard, by a zeal of propagating her honour

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nour and worship, and an eagerness to imitate her virtues.

First Point.

Consider, that our Lady challenges our love and respect, as being the only one who is originally noble; all others are ennobled by being made adopted children of God; but she is conceived so in the womb of her blessed Mother Saint *Ann*, being predestinated from Eternity to be Mother of the Son of God. Holy Mother of God, how beautiful and amiable are you! And how pure! there is not the least spot in you. I heartily rejoice and give God thanks for your all-immaculate conception, as being the prerogative that pleases you most; if you had it not, and I could purchase it for you with the loss of my life, I would joyfully give it for that effect.

Second Point.

Consider how the Blessed Virgin is not only happy, in having been conceived without sin, but much more in that she never committed the least sin; and therefore

fore was ever void of the smallest spot or blemish, and always full of grace. The Holy Ghost in the Canticles says: *The number of my chosen Virgins is endless, yet my perfect one is an only one.* This perfect one is the Blessed Virgin Mary; she has no equal, for she alone never appeared before the Divine eyes in quality of a sinner; she alone was always pure, immaculate, and perfectly beautiful and amiable; she alone can say, God has possessed me from the beginning. O Sacred Queen, I infinitely rejoice, to think that it is impossible for a creature to be more pure and perfect than you are.

Third Point.

Consider, that all the perfections and prerogatives which have been distributed among other Saints, are collected together in her; God united in her person the purest virginity, with the most holy maternity; the highest contemplation with the most lively action; the most tender compassion with the most invincible courage; the most sublime dignity with the most profound humility; so that St. *Anselme* affirms, that greater perfection under God cannot

cannot be found. She is the most beautiful work that ever came out of the Divine hands, being only less than God himself, and by a strict tie of blood with *Jesus Christ*, she enters into a degree almost Divine, in so much that he will have the concurrence of her prayers, together with his own infinite merits, to be the immediate cause of effectually obtaining our Salvation; prayers so efficacious in Heaven, that even Christ himself, from whom they have all their force and efficacy, respects them as coming from his own Mother.

II. MEDITATION.

The Preludes as before.

First Point.

CONSIDER, that our Lady challenges our love and respect, for her high Dignity and incomparable Sanctity. To know this, we must know who is her Son: She enjoys the straitest conjunction possible with the Sovereign increated Good, which is the highest preferment a pure creature can be assumed to, without passing the bounds

bounds of a pure creature ; and it is the operation which comes nearest of any thing to the Divinity. *St. Bonaventure*, upon those words of the Gospel, *Erat Subditus Illis*, sticks not to say that *Mary* had God for her subject.

Second Point.

Consider, that it is the opinion of Divines, that the Blessed Virgin truly merited the august quality of Mother of God ; as bringing on her side such dispositions for receiving this extraordinary Dignity, that it was very reasonable God should confer it upon her, and the Church constantly repeats unto her, that she merited to have *Jesus* in her womb ; nay, *St. Ambrose* expressly says, she was worthy that the Son of God should be born of her.

Whatever Idea we frame to ourselves of the Blessed Virgin's grace, though never so great, it will fall short of the truth, because it can never come up to the height of the employment God designed her. On the top of those very mountains, the Angelical Spirits, is laid the foundation of this stately edifice, the Virgin Mary ; she began where others end. The reason of this

this Almighty God himself tells, viz. because he himself was made man in her Womb. If such was her beginning, what must her progress and end be? Since, each moment of her life, she went on increasing in perfection. No one can conceive, much less express the extreme beauty of her soul; all we know is, that she is the most wonderful and most beautiful work that ever came out of the Almighty's Hands; (except the Humanity of her Divine Son) and that she is only less than God.

Third Point.

Consider, that it is the general opinion, that the Blessed Virgin lived twenty-four years after our Saviour's death; if so, according to the custom of the Primitive Church, she communicated every day; and that Sacrament giving grace proportionable to the dispositions of the receiver, since her dispositions were certainly beyond all that can be conceived, it cannot be doubted but that the treasure of grace she received from her Son, was beyond all expression: Nothing can fathom the depth of her merits, she being not only a sea, as her name imports, but an Abyss of Grace.

III. ME-

III. M E D I T A T I O N.

*The Preludes still the same.**First Point.*

CONsider, that our Blessed Lady challenges our love, because she is the most beloved of God, who chose her before all, and would have her co-operate with him for our Salvation, by sacrificing her only Son for his Glory and our Redemption; for Christ was not less the real Son of the Virgin, than he was the true Son of God the Father; and as the Eternal Father, for his own Glory, and for the safety of mankind, delivered him up to death, so the Blessed Virgin did the same for the same end; offering that part of the Divine Victim Christ, which belonged to her, and that with readiness and constancy of mind. For which reason *St. Bernard* piously supposes that the Eternal Father said to her: *Because you have not spared your Only Son, but have offered him for my Glory and the Salvation of Mankind, there shall be nothing I will not do for you in recompence. I will give you a numerous posterity of chosen people; I will constitute you*
Mother

Mother of the living; you shall have in custody the treasury of my liberalities; you shall distribute all my graces; you shall direct my Justice; in a word, you shall have the Sovereign command over my heart: my clemency shall be subject to the law of your tongue, it being fitting that I should bestow as many blessings upon the earth as you shall think good to desire. Thus far St. Bernard.

Second Point.

Consider, that Almighty God loves the Blessed Virgin to such a degree, that he will have us receive all graces through her hands; and the devout Father *Suarez* infers, that his Divine Majesty loves her alone, more than all the other Saints and Angels together. *St. Ildephonse* and *St. Bernard* say, that the Redemption of this perfect creature (by which she was preserved from ever incurring the least sin) was one of the chiefest works the Eternal word had in view when he took upon him our human nature. Saint *Bernard* also says, that for her sake, that is, to make her Sovereign Queen of Heaven and Earth, God made this World. Thus God Almighty loved the Sacred Virgin: wherefore

fore we ought to love her, for love of his Divine Majesty.

Third Point.

Consider, that God's favours shew his love, and make the greatness of the Saints. Those he bestowed on the Blessed Virgin are incomparably above whatever he has bestowed upon any other; therefore by consequence she is the most beloved and most eminent in Sanctity of any. The three Divine Persons have enriched her with the most precious of gifts, God the Father having taken her for his Daughter, God the Son for his Mother, and God the Holy Ghost for his Spouse; no advantage is wanting to her, nothing can be added to greatness, she is established Queen of Heaven and Earth.

IV. MEDITATION.

The Preludes as before.

First Point.

CONSIDER, that our blessed Lady challenges our love for the love and affection

affection she bears to us, and the favours she has done us, and benefits she has bestowed upon us, which may all be comprehended in this; she has given us our Jesus, and by giving him, what is there in the abyss of the Divine Treasure which she has not given us? It was not without knowing the value of the gift, for she knew it perfectly well, and earnestly wished us all the good which was to be derived from him to us.

Richard of St. Victor says, She desired the salvation of all; she sought it, and by her prayers obtained it; nay, it was effected by her means, and therefore she is called the Safety of the world.

In a gift, the love of the giver is chiefly to be regarded and esteemed; in those the Blessed Virgin bestows on us, Love has the greatest part. None can express her love and tenderness for us; for if she casts her eyes on herself, she cannot but reflect on the last words her Son spoke to her in our favour: *Woman, Behold your Son*. It is impossible she should not love us, with the greatest affection, after such a recommendation.

Second Point.

Consider, that our Lady finds several incentives to love us with all tenderness and affection; for if she looks on herself (as we said before) she sees that she is in quality of our Mother, left us as such by the will and testament of her dying Son; and to comply with the duty of a Mother, favours alone are not sufficient, Love and Affection must be the principle from which they proceed; therefore, if at the time that her Divine Son declared her our Mother, she had not found in herself the bowels of tenderness and compassion for us, our Lord had certainly bestowed them upon her that she might bear that character. If she turns her eyes towards Almighty God, she acknowledges him as the original of all her affection to us, so that her love for God is the measure of her love to us.

If then her heart, now she reigns in Heaven, is a furnace of divine love, seven times hotter than the hearts of all the other Saints, it follows, that their love for us is far less than that which burns in the breast of this our Heavenly Mother. And she being now invested with such power and authority, there is no doubt

doubt but she makes use of it for our advantage: and though at present we cannot discover the number and qualities of the favours we have received by her intercession, yet, after this life, we shall see the many effectual graces she has obtained for us, and how she concurred in a singular manner with all the favours and graces, which the Divine Mercy has bestowed upon us.

Third Point.

Consider, that we cannot doubt of our Lady's seeing all our necessities in the Divine Word, as in a clear and spotless mirror: for if Almighty God makes them known to our Guardian Angels, to the end they may help and assist us, it cannot be supposed that he would keep them secret from his own Mother, to whom he has recommended the safety of all Mankind, much more than he has to any Angel the safety of any one in particular. If then she knows and sees all our necessities, who can think that the sight of so much misery, in creatures so helpless of themselves, does not move her compassion to implore her Divine

Son's mercy for them, that they may find speedy relief to their miseries, since asking and obtaining is one and the same thing with her. We may apprehend, that finding nothing in us which deserves her affection, her love for us is totally extinguished; but it is quite the contrary, since our demerits, and want of motives in us to deserve her love, concur in great part to make us objects of it.

Our Holy Father Saint *Augustin* says, that the love which burns in our Lady's breast, and her care and solicitude for us, as much surpasses those of all the Saints, as she surpasses them in dignity, and love to God.

Several Means of honouring our Lady, and testifying our Love to her.

The First, and most acceptable, is to have her example before our eyes, and to endeavour to imitate her as our dear Mother, Lady, and Mistress. Now, though she was eminent in all virtues, yet the following ones are those she valued most, and what will render us most dear to her Divine Son, and herself.

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The First is her Humility, which made her most pleasing to God, as she says in her Canticle : *God has had regard to the Humility of his Servant, therefore all Nations shall call me blessed.* And St. Bernard says she pleased God by her Virginity, but she conceived him by her Humility.

The time we ought chiefly to practise it, is when we are to communicate; Communion being, as it were, a new Incarnation, for the same Son of God, whom the Angel called Son of the most High, and whom our Lady then conceived, comes into our breast by Communion : we must therefore endeavour to make our Humility such, that it may supply for what we want of purity, (though we have cleansed our conscience by confession) and in imitation of our Blessed Lady, we must believe, as she did, that all that is foretold us of the wonderful effects of this Sacrament, will, through the mercy of God, be accomplished in us, although it seems impossible to us. Then, with a profound Humility and sense of our unworthiness, let each of us say : Behold the handmaid of our Lord, me his unworthy creature, let it be done to me according to his merciful designs ; it is to obey his Will that

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I approach to receive him, though I am most unworthy of the favour.

The Second Virtue we must imitate, is her constant and perfect obedience to the Will of God. *Be it done to me according to his word.* The same we ought to say in all occasions, whether we be in peace or in trouble, whether we have sensible devotion or not; and in fine, whatever circumstances we are in, God's Will be done, readily obeying it, which way soever it be made known to us. This our Lady always did, by which she conceived and carried him in her heart, before she conceived him in her womb. And this spiritual Conception of him was more available than the corporal, which only made her Mother of God, whereas the other rendered her the worthy Mother of God.

This Privilege we may enjoy, according to our dear Lord's own words, who says, *Those that do the Will of my Father, are my Sister, Brother, and Mother.* Nothing will make us more pleasing to our Lady, than the imitating her in this virtue; it was the advice she gave at the marriage feast of *Cana in Galilee*, bidding them perform whatever her Divine Son should order them.

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The Third Virtue we must try to imitate, is her invincible Courage and Patience in all she suffered in the Passion of her Divine Son. To know what that was, we must measure it by the greatness of her love; her love for her dear Son surpassed that of all other Mothers, and she had a clear knowledge of what her Son suffered; for besides being informed of it by the Prophets, and by that Divine Son himself, she beheld it with her own eyes, and felt in her heart what she suffered in his Body. None can conceive the greatness of her sufferings, which she bore with an infinite Patience, standing all the while by her Son on the Cross: her grief was without comparison! None but her Divine Son could surpass it, and therefore she is deservedly styled Queen of Martyrs. What obligation have we to love and serve her, who for our Salvation consented to the death of her own Son! she could with less difficulty have given her own life. Can we, after this, think much of sacrificing, for her sake, whatever is most dear to us?

Most dear Lady, and Mother of my Saviour, obtain me the Grace to imitate you in these Virtues, especially in patiently bearing

bearing whatever sufferings of mind and body Almighty God shall permit to fall upon me, and that with an unshaken constancy, never yielding to dejection in any of them, thereby to imitate the example you have given me.

Other means of honouring our Lady, and testifying our love to her, are :

1st, To consider her as our Mother, and make recourse to her as such.

The last thing our dear Saviour recommended on the Cross to us, in the Person of St. *John*, was *Ecce Mater tua*, behold your Mother ; let us ever do so ; especially when it pleases God to permit us to suffer, that we may learn of her how to comport ourselves therein. What an honour is it to have the Mother of God for our Mother ! We must endeavour not to render ourselves unworthy of it, and therefore must avoid sin, for that only can make us unworthy of her Adoption and Love. O most dear Lady ! shew yourself a Mother to my soul, for the sake of your dear Son I beg it, and then my Salvation will be secure.

2d, To respect and honour her in her Pictures, Images, and little Altars dedicated to her.

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3d, To fast the Vigils of her Feasts, or do some Penance, and (if a secular) give Alms.

4th, To confess and communicate on her Festivals.

5th, To let no day pass without practising some Devotion or duty in her Honour, as saying our Beads, Hearing Mass in her Honour, &c.

6th, To get Mass said in thanksgiving to Almighty God for creating her so perfect: and for the immense treasure of Grace, Sanctity, and Glory, which he has conferred on her incomparable Soul. For as there is no proportion between a limited thanks, and a gift of infinite value, so by doing this, God himself becomes the Sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for his own gift. This will be a most agreeable token of our love to her; all the Saints together cannot give her a greater nor a more acceptable one.

Meditations

Meditations for each Sunday of the Month.

FIRST MEDITATION

FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY.

*Of the End for which God created
Man.*

I. POINT.

CONSIDER, that the End for which you were created, was to love God your Creator with the whole extent of your Heart, of your Soul, and of your Strength, and to labour for the increase of his Glory who gave you your being, and created your Soul immortal, and capable to enjoy him for Eternity.

Cast back your thoughts to a hundred years past, what was you then? and who would have missed you if you had never been? yet you were so happy as to dwell in the heart and thoughts of God from Eternity! and he disposed all created things for your use. He framed you in your Mother's Womb, created your Soul a perfect

fect Picture of his Divine Nature, and has ever since protected you. Nay not content with that, as to his child he has designed you a future inheritance above; what obligations have you to him for preferring you to so many that would have served him better?

It was no ways necessary that God should create you, and place you in this World; but since he has been pleased to do so, it is necessary that you should love, obey, and serve him. All-powerful God as he is, he cannot discharge you from that obligation, how then can you dispense with yourself? *Our Lord made all things for himself*, nor could he make them for any other End. You having received all from him, are consequently all his. Have you not lived hitherto as if you belonged only to yourself? and subsisted by yourself, making your own honour, pleasure, and interest your End, as if you had been placed in this World only to sport, play, eat, drink, and seek your own Satisfaction and Interest? whereas he created you that you might serve and worship him here, and so attain to that everlasting life he has designed for you hereafter. Admire God's infinite Patience in having

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suffered

suffered you so long without sinking you into hell for such ungrateful proceedings !

II. POINT.

Consider that God, having given you a being, is pleased to conserve the same; which is still a greater favour than the first : for as St. Augustin says, each moment of conservation is as it were a new creation : because if God did not conserve us, we should cease to be. Our creation was but the work of a moment, but this is continual without interruption, in which his power appears not less than his love. If then we are so strictly obliged to be wholly his because he gave us our being, how much more are we so for his continual concurrence to preserve the same? And how much are we obliged to love and serve him for it? Were this not commanded us, justice requires it of us ; for what more just than to serve him from whom we have received all that we have? And the very end for which God conserves our being is, that serving him here in this life, we may for ever enjoy him in the next. **He himself will be our reward.**

Admire

Admire the prodigies of God's love that will so bountifully reward our complying with this duty ; that his greatness will for all Eternity be employed in making us great ; his wisdom in contenting our knowledge ; and his goodness in replenishing our hearts with Joy, Love, and Bliss ! How justly are they punished with an Eternity of Misery, who make so slight of this as to prefer some sordid pleasure and satisfaction before it ? Hell is even too small a punishment for them.

III. POINT.

Consider yet a far greater favour, for which you are still more obliged to God than for your creation and conservation, to wit, Redemption. If then you owe all you are, and all you are able to do, for your creation and conservation, what do you owe, and what should you render to God for your Redemption ? To create you cost him but one word ; but to redeem you, it cost him the very last drop of his blood, which he shed after so cruel and painful a manner, that the very thoughts and apprehension he had of it cast him into a bloody sweat.

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The Love God shews in this our Redemption, is inconceivable; so that it may be truly said that his Divine Majesty, all-powerful as he is, could do no more for man than what he has done, by becoming himself man, and dying for him; by which he has not only delivered us from eternal damnation, but also purchased for us a right and title to the kingdom of heaven; endowing us with grace, and leaving us the Sacrament of Penance as a means to recover it whenever we have unhappily lost it by sin. And to strengthen us in good, he gives himself as food to our souls; and that we may be provided of an offering worthy of the greatness of his Father, which might satisfy for our sins and obtain all we stand in need of, he leaves himself in the holy Eucharist, that assisting at Mass we may offer him for the said ends.

What could God do more for us than he has done? If, after all, we are so ungrateful as not to comply with our duty to him, which is to decline evil and do good, we truly deserve eternal punishment.

Reflections and Resolutions.

Reflect and see if you have employed the life and being you have received for the
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end for which God bestowed it upon you, which was, that you might honour and serve him here, and enjoy him for eternity hereafter ; or if, on the contrary, you have not made pleasure and satisfaction your end. If you have, be confounded at your ingratitude, and admire God's patience in suffering you so long, and not taking away the life you have so ill employed.

Look back with fear upon your past years. How long have you been in this World ? And what have you done for God that may deserve this reward ? You will soon come to the end of your life, without, perhaps having made one step towards the end for which you were created ; what terror will this your negligence be to you at your death !

Be convinced that if you comply not with the End for which God created you, whatever good qualifications you may have, you are really worth nothing : for we truly are but what we are in God's sight : and if we are not right in his eyes, we are but a burden to the earth, and only fit, as barren trees, to be cast into the fire.

Your happiness in this life, as well as in the next, depends upon your performing your duty to God. St. Augustin says,

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speaking of himself; *Whilst I was ill with you, my God, I was ill with myself; and whilst I made war against you, I was in trouble: for you have ordained it, and so it is that every inordinate Passion is its own punishment.*

You require services from your inferiors, yet refuse to serve God: How unjust is this! you owe all to God, and he has infinitely more right to dispose of you, and all that belongs to you, than a carver has to dispose of the statue he has made, which he may either destroy or conserve, without rendering account to any; or a Master of his slave, he having bought you, and given for you a price of far more value than the life of all men together. Therefore St. Paul says, we are no more our own, but belong to Christ, insomuch that we cannot lawfully serve any but him, no more than a slave, who can do nothing for himself or any other, but must do all for his Master.

If the Jews would not permit the money that Jesus was sold for to be put into their treasury, because it was the price of the Blood and Life of a man; how then can we employ ourselves, who are the price of that Blood, in any other use than for him that shed it for us?

Let

Let us then resolve, for the future, to live for him who died for us. What more reasonable ! he is unworthy of life that refuses this, and not only deserves hell ! but that a greater hell should be created for him.

*The Second Meditation for the Second Sunday.
Of Death.*

First Prelude. Imagine yourself by a dying Person now in his Agony.

Second Prelude. Ask the Grace to know what passes at that hour, that you may square your following death by it.

F I R S T P O I N T.

The Death of a Sinner.

BEHOLD him agonizing between two eternities, oppressed with pains unquiet in conscience, full of anguish, tempted by the devil, terrified with the certain appearance of death, and the uncertainty of what will follow after it. All his joys and pleasures at an end, his designs broken, he must leave all : nothing is left him but a winding-sheet, grief, and remorse. He has lost all, truly all ! grief and anguish surround

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surround him on every side; from the memory of past sins, which then will appear in their own colours: their number and deformity will affrighten him; the devil will do his utmost to cast him into despair, the severity of God's Judgments demanding account of every idle word, the loss of so much time spent in vanity, with the neglect of so many helps afforded him by God for his salvation.

The pleasures and riches he leaves behind will trouble him, being forced to leave all he loved and delighted in; for all will then be taken from him. *O death!* says Ecclesiasticus, *how bitter is thy memory to a man who has peace in his riches!* that body he has been so tender of, shall be the food of vermin, and his soul neglected for love of it, shall burn in hell: which way soever he turns himself, he can see nothing to comfort him, but all to afflict him.

What an agony will he have when his soul is to go forth of his body to be judged by that God, whose laws he has so often violated! preferring that of flesh and blood before it; making use of what God gave him, to offend his Divine Majesty and damn himself: as also to see his blindness in preferring earth to Heaven, a moment
to

to a whole eternity; the body to the soul. Then he will beg for time to rectify his mistakes, but it shall not be granted. How much does it concern us to use time well while we have it, and to do now what we shall then wish to have done! to those that do so, death will be sweet and comfortable.

S E C O N D P O I N T.

The Death of the Just.

Though death is so terrible to a sinner, it is not so to the Just, who having used their endeavours to keep and observe God's law, they confide then in his mercies, and the merits of Christ, that they shall see and enjoy him for all Eternity. Not, but they have a fear of death, which is natural to all, but that fear is without anxiety; they willingly submit and accept of it, since it is God's will and good pleasure: so making a virtue of necessity, they are content to forsake and leave all things of this world, which at that hour will appear truly vile.

What comfort will their fidelity to God, and the observance of his law, then give them! all they have suffered upon that account, and their present pains patiently borne,

borne, will increase their crown and shorten their purgatory. How happy will they be at that hour, having served and suffered for a God, whose perfections are infinite: with whom they hope to reign for ever, with an infallible security never to lose, or be separated from him. Their pains and labours are at an end, but the reward they are going to receive will last for ever.

THIRD POINT.

Of the Certainty of Death, and Uncertainty of the Time and Manner.

That you are to die is most certain, the sentence was pronounced at the beginning of the world; none has ever escaped it, nor can fly from it a moment beyond the time prefixed by God. On the other side, nothing more uncertain than the time, manner, and place. The uncertainty of which ought to keep us always on our guard; for we know not whether it will be soon or late, at sea or at land, by a sudden and violent death, or by a natural one; in the state of grace or of sin; all which is unknown to us, and God will have it so, that we may be always ready.

How

How many hath death unexpectedly stolen away while they were eating, sleeping, laughing, playing ! and therefore Almighty God warns us to be ready at all hours, since we know not the hour in which the Lord of the house will come ; and it concerns us very much not to be found unprepared. For to perish once, is to be lost for ever. If we fail the first time, we can never repair it ; and no less than a whole Eternity of happiness or misery depends upon it.

How can we dare to live in a state that would be our eternal ruin, if we died in it ? No concern, however great, can equal this ! how mad and foolish are we if we neglect the precautions necessary for a happy death ! whatever pains we take on that account we shall never regret ; but if we are wanting in so great a concern, we shall for ever lament it with fruitless and never-ending tears.

Reflections and Resolutions.

Your death depends upon your life. Such as is your life such will be your death. The actions of our life paints the picture of our death. How can we love in a moment

ment what we have not loved during life, or hate at our death what we have loved all our life ?

What judgment will you frame at the hour of your death, of all the greatness and vanities of this world ? what will you carry with you of those treasures you have got together ? *fool, says God, this night will I demand thy soul, and to whom shall all that belong, which thou hast got with so much pains ?*

If you were now to die, are you ready ? Is your soul in a good state ? Are your affairs settled and in good order ? If you are wise, you will now do without delay what you will then wish to have done.

To damn yourself for ungrateful children, who will scarce thank you for what you have done for them, and who cannot retrieve your soul when once it is lost, is the greatest of follies ! to lose your soul for goods or riches which you must leave, and perhaps much sooner than you think, is still a greater folly ! put the case, you might enjoy them even for a hundred years, what is that compared to Eternity ! when Scripture says a thousand years is but as one moment ! and would you for that put yourself in danger of eternal torments ?

Resolve

Resolve then, that for the future your chief care shall be to live in such a manner, that when death seizes you, you may reasonably hope to be eternally happy, your conscience not accusing you of any mortal sin; for not to be careful of this, is to run a great risque of your salvation, since death may come on the sudden, and sickness may deprive you of your senses, or pain hinder you from any serious thought.

Prudence also requires of you that you prevent the time, and do even now, in regard to your temporal affairs, what you would be glad then to have done; for besides that it will be a great ease and comfort to you at that hour to have settled all things, it will prevent their being disposed of contrary to your inclination.

Provide yourself with motives of hope and confidence, for there is nothing you will stand in greater need of at that hour. Habituate yourself during life, strongly to confide in the mercies of God and in the merits of Christ; nothing pleases God more, and it is the best means to secure your salvation: you have the word of truth for it, that none ever confided in God and was lost; it is there that the enemy, at that hour, endeavours to make man despair.

Daily beg the grace of a happy death, and perform some devotions to our blessed Lady to obtain that favour for you, since she never intercedes for any one in vain. Endeavour always to say the Ave Maria devoutly, and you will have the comfort at your death to have as often begged her intercession for a happy one, as you shall have recited it.

Motives for Confidence in God, and the Practice of it.

Almighty God promises those that confide in him, that they shall abound in all graces and blessings ; that nothing shall be wanting to them, for that his eyes are fixed upon them that hope in him ; that his mercies shall surround them on all sides ; that he himself will be by them, and be their defence in the day of tribulation. He assures them that he bestows his graces, and the effects of his mercy, proportionably to the trust and confidence they put in him, that those that confide in him shall know truth ; that is, he will manifest himself to them, and will grant them all they ask with confidence.

It seems as if our Lord thought he could never say enough, in many places of Holy Scripture, to testify how much this confidence

confidence is delightful to him, and how he favours and loves those that confide and entirely abandon themselves to his paternal Providence. He told a servant of his, that the filial confidence of a Christian soul was like the eye that wounds the heart of the lover; and that it offers violence to his mercies, for that he could not but assist those that confided in him; and also that he would favour those that have an humble confidence above their merits in this world and the next; and the more they confide and are persuaded of his goodness, the more they should gain, it being impossible for them not to obtain what they firmly confide they shall, having his promise for it.

To strengthen our confidence, he assumes the sweetest names, and answers them with real effects; as Friend, Advocate, Physician, Pastor, Brother, Father, Spouse; and in divers places of Holy Scripture he tells us, that he has continual care of us, and that he carries us, and will for ever carry us in his bosom, in his heart, and in his bowels; and though a mother should forget the child of her womb, yet he never would forget us, for we are written in his hands that he may always have us in view. Nay, he assures us that he loves us as his Father loves him; and that he will have

us be where he is ; that is, rest with him in the bosom of his Father for all eternity.

If we have offended him, he promises that if we return to him with repentance, resolving to amend and put our trust in his goodness, that he will receive us and forget our offences. After all this, and all he has suffered for us, Shall we harbour any doubt ? Those that hope not in you, my God, know you not ; for you will sooner cease to be God than cease to be good and merciful.

God is not satisfied with only promising to pardon the penitent, but he takes an oath of it, and swears by himself : *As I live, saith our Lord, I will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and live.* Why then, my soul, art thou sad ? And why dost thou trouble me ? Say with the Just, Who ever hoped in God and was lost ? His mercies are far greater than all my sins, and than all the sins of the whole world.

The trust and confidence we put in God, makes us become of man, God ; of weak, strong ; of poor, rich ; and of miserable, happy. We ought never to confide more in God than when all seems most desperate ; never to fear less, than when all appears most terrible ; nor ever to abandon ourselves

selves more entirely to him, than when we think ourselves most abandoned by him.

My God and my hope, I abandon myself to you, I put my trust and confidence totally in you; you cannot permit me to go astray, let me fall, or betray me, whilst I depend and trust in you: no, 'tis impossible for me to miscarry or be lost whilst I place my whole confidence in you.

To know our sins and miseries without knowing God's mercies, is what causes despair. But to be sensible of his infinite mercies when we reflect on our sins and miseries, is what creates confidence and joy. Jesus is not only a God, but also a God Mediator, and a God Saviour. Jesus would not be Jesus, if we could take away his mercies; nor he would not be a Saviour, if he had no tenderness for sinners.

The Third Meditation for the Third Sunday.

Of Judgment.

FIRST Prelude. Imagine that your soul having quitted your body, is presented before the tribunal of God, to receive the sentence pronounced for or against her.

Second Prelude. Beg the grace that this consideration may move you so to spend the remainder of your life, that you may be able

to render a good account in that dreadful day.

I. POINT.

Consider the world as a prison, wherein all mankind, as malefactors, are detained; and that they are called out one after another, by the supreme Judge, to give an account of all their talents, natural and supernatural; and of the use they have made of them, of the wealth and means God has given them, and of the years they have past in this world, which were granted them for the attaining a happy eternity. This account many are actually a giving this very moment, God having called some of your fellow-prisoners from this world, to render him a just account of what they owe him. 1st, For their creation, he having given them a being that they might honour, love, and serve him here, and enjoy him for eternity. 2dly, For their redemption, by which he has not only freed them from eternal misery, but purchased for them an eternal happiness with the price of the life and blood of a Godman; for each drop of which they must be accountable. 3dly, For their baptism, by which they were made children of God, and received a right to an eternal bliss. 4thly, For being called to the true faith, and

and for having so often pardoned them their sins in the Sacrament of penance, and given them his Sacred Body in the Holy Eucharist. See and consider what account you shall be able to give if God should call you now to render it.

II. POINT.

Consider that the moment the soul forsakes the body, it shall be judged, and that so strictly! even to the least idle word, and deliberate thought. And that the judgment then pronounced will be irrevocable, no appeal allowed from the sentence, which is no sooner given but executed, without excuse or delay. Think what will be the fear of a soul standing before her judge, with her good and bad actions by her, which will accompany her to her everlasting reward or punishment, and will be so narrowly looked into, that not a word or thought will escape, nor a quarter of an hour mispent, but what will appear: and according to what each has received he shall be judged; those to whom more has been given, more will be demanded.

The matter of our judgment will be all the good and evil we have done, which are seeds that will fructify for eternity, either in eternal happiness or misery. We shall be

be judged not only for what we have done, but for what we ought to have done, and have not done, and for what we have occasioned others to do; and for what we might have prevented, and through human respects did not, or have contributed to, by our silence, negligence, or ill example.

The two Books by which we shall be judged, are the Gospel and our own conscience: the first will shew us what we ought to have done, and the other what we have done. What confusion will it be to a soul to have all her committed evil and omitted good exposed, when it shall be said, *behold the man and his works!* a comparison shall be made with those that have received far less from Almighty God, and have served him far better.

Consider, whilst you have time, whether the good you have done can bear poise with the evil you have committed. What heroical acts of virtue have you ever practised? what have you ever done or suffered for the increase of God's glory? if so happy as to have done your duty, what joy will it be to have those words addressed to you by the judge: *Come, you blessed of my Father, and receive, no more the cross as in your life, but the reward for having carried it; possess the kingdom and crown prepared for you,*
from

from the creation of the world. No human heart is capable to conceive the transport of joy which those words will produce! endeavour then to live so well that you may deserve to hear them.

III. POINT.

Our Lord says, I will search Jerusalem with lamps. And if Jerusalem, that is, the Saints, how much more Babylon, that is sinners! if the just themselves will fear and tremble to appear before Almighty God, what will be the terror of the wicked, knowing themselves guilty of great crimes, when the least deliberate ill thought will be punished! They will even desire the mountains to fall upon them to hide them from his sight, but nothing shall be able to do it, though they shall never see the beatifical vision; for that would make them happy, which they are not to be for one moment, having rendered themselves unworthy of it. If the devil would willingly suffer all the torments of hell to see the face of God for a moment, what will be their rage and despair to think they might have enjoyed it, not a moment only, but for a whole eternity, and are deprived of it through their own fault!

The

The witnesses that will rise against them will be their own conscience, holy Scripture, good Books, Sermons, and good Example. The devils will shew them the sins they have committed, with their circumstances. The good Angel will alledge his endeavours. And above all, their having rendered the examples and doctrine, labours and Blood of Christ useless, will be objected against them, and condemn them. Besides their sins of commission, those of omission will stand against them, having neglected the good they ought to have done, and omitted to make use of their gifts and talents, natural and supernatural; as strength, health, wealth, and time, according to the Divine Will.

The Judge having given the definitive Sentence for an eternity, with those dreadful words: *Go, you cursed, into hell fire prepared for the devil and his followers.* Presently they will be hauled away by the devils, to whom they will be delivered up to be tormented for eternity. Endeavour so to consider this dreadful truth as to prevent it from befalling you, for it is yet in your power. God being so good as to put the pen into your hand, take notice that your sentence will be what is written by your actions in this world. 'How unpardonable will' be if you are unhappy,

happy, since you have it in your own power!

Reflections and Resolutions.

It is in your power to blot out your offences by the tears of penance. You may also, with Moses, resist or overcome the Almighty by the arms of Prayer. He is also to be gained by money given in Charity, and is so tender as to be moved to pity and mercy by our tears, and appeased and satisfied by penance and change of manners.

You may as yet appeal from his justice to his mercy, and oblige him to blot out the sentence of your condemnation; but after death he is neither to be resisted, moved, nor gained: he will then judge in rigour, and do justice without mercy. His love will inkindle his anger; and as his love for us has been infinite, so his anger against our ingratitude will be infinite.

Reflect what a confusion it will be to you to have the whole history of your life exposed, all you have done, and all you have omitted to do, which you ought to have done; all that God has done for you, and all you have done against him; his goodness to you, and your ingratitude to him!

If you are wise, you will prevent this confusion by an humble accusing yourself of your sins, and satisfying for them by
penance

penance: make use of those following most powerful means for your security: 1st, Charity and Alms deeds. 2dly, Pardon from your heart whoever has offended you, for in this God will have you be his model, and will treat you as you treat others; therefore be sure to pardon entirely, if you desire to be pardoned. 3dly, Do not judge nor condemn any, not even in thought, and you shall not be condemned; you have Christ's promise for it. Lastly, never fail daily to beg our Blessed Lady to obtain you a favourable sentence, for she is all-powerful with God.

The Fourth Meditation for the Fourth Sunday.

Of Hell.

1st Prelude. Descend in spirit to hell, the prison of God's justice! full of flames, fire and smoke, and of all sorts of torments that can torment and punish the souls of those that die in mortal sin.

2d Prelude. Beg of God such a lively apprehension of those torments that it may keep you from ever deserving to feel them.

I. POINT.

Scripture calls it a furnace which ever burns, and never is extinguished. A prison where the damned are bound in chains of fire. ^A land of malediction, and of all
sorts

sorts of misery, where the wretched souls are heaped upon one another like faggots in a great fire. The lake of God's wrath, a pond of fire and sulphur, into which are plunged those who have passed their lives in pleasures and delights. A land of darkness, where never any ray of light shall enter. The devil's house, where he rages and torments the damned in quality of executioner of God's justice. O what land! what a house! what a dwelling! O my God, how great an evil is sin, that you are obliged to punish it so severely! O my soul, what do we fear, if we fear not hell!

To declare more in particular what the damned suffer, we must know that both the soul and the body having sinned, there are torments allotted for each. In hell there are three sorts of pains: the pain of sense, the pain of loss, and the worm of conscience. As to the first, no pain, nor even all the pains, martyrdoms, or cruelties put together that ever have been, or could possibly be invented or practised in this world, have any proportion, not only with all the pains, but with the very least pain of hell. The greatest fire or hottest forge are no more than painted fires in comparison with the infernal flames; our fire being created by God for our use and comfort, but the fire of hell he has created purely to punish

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and torment those unhappy souls who are surrounded with it. Fire above them, fire beneath them, fire on the right hand, fire on the left! add to this the other torments proper to each sense or member: the eyes will be afflicted with the horrible and terrifying view of the devils, so dreadful, that the sight of one of them would frighten the most courageous man out of his senses. The ears will be tormented with fearful horrible howlings and lamentations of the damned cursing each other. The taste with bitter tears and raging hunger and thirst never to be quenched.

Though devils will strive to outdo one another in cruelty to the damned, whom they will torment in all the parts of their bodies and faculties of their souls, though not all alike, but each according to the number and greatness of their sins: and this without hopes of relief, or one moment's solace, but for all Eternity, which renders them inconsolable, and will make them suffer each moment what they must eternally suffer, plunged in an unexplicable grief, without the least consolation not so much as a drop of water to quench their raging thirst, that is to say, not the least mitigation. Yet whatever conceit we frame of their sufferings, it falls still short of what they suffer. O dreadful Eternity, what man
can

can think of you, and not amend his life !

II. POINT.

Consider the pain of loss, which will be more terrible and afflicting than all the other pains. It consists in feeling and knowing that they have lost the vision of God, and consequently all good. To lose God, to be eternally separated from God, to be hated by God, is an infinite and terrible evil ! and in place of the company and society of Angels and Saints, they are surrounded with innumerable devils. A prison and dungeon, in place of a kingdom designed by God, and purchased for them by Jesus Christ, with the last drop of his Precious Blood, which upon such easy terms they might have enjoyed for all Eternity ; yet have lost it by their own fault ! Were it but a temporal kingdom lost for a trifle, and miserably exchanged for a dungeon, what a cutting grief would it be to the person who had made such a foolish bargain ! this gives a slight idea of the pain of loss, but is nothing in comparison with it.

III. POINT.

Consider the third pain, which is the worm of Conscience, that continually gnaws them, and will do so for all eternity ; never letting them rest for a moment,

but continually representing to them all their crimes and ingratitude to God, who not only gave them their being, but also died for them, to save them from the misery into which they have plunged themselves, through their own fault, when they might so easily have escaped it. What grief, despair, and rage will it cause in them ! how will they curse each other that has contributed to it ! children will curse their Parents, and Parents their children ; Masters their Servants, and Servants their Masters, as being in part the cause of the torments they endure ; which would be more tolerable if they could but once have an end ; but that is their greatest torment, to know that their misery will be endless. O never-ending Eternity, how prodigious is your extent ! each moment beginning and never coming to an end ! O ever which never ends, but lasts for ever !

Reflections and Resolutions.

Reflect on your obligations to God in not having permitted you to fall into hell, where you should have been long ago, had you been treated according to your deserts, since one mortal sin deserves that punishment. And also for giving you time to see and consider these things, that you may prevent them from happening to you.

Follow

Follow St. Bernard's advice, and descend in spirit into hell, while you are living, that you may not feel after your death what is there suffered; where you must have taken your eternal lodging, if God had taken you out of this life after such and such a sin.

Accustom yourself, in all troubles or afflictions, to compare them with what you would have suffered in hell, if God's mercies had not kept you from falling into it: And you will find you have no reason to complain or to think you have any injustice or wrong done to you: for nothing can be so in regard to any one that has but once offended God mortally; since such an one is worthy of all evil, and unworthy of all good, which is the state of the damned.

Fear sin above all things, and avoid it with all possible care, since one is sufficient to cause your damnation.

Endeavour to satisfy for the sins you have committed, by patiently bearing all the trials that God shall permit to befall you, if you cannot do worthy works of penance. Secondly, by giving alms: no money can you lay out more to your own advantage; and you will be truly blameable, and no ways to be pitied, if you have it in your power, and do not do it. You would befriend yourself more by refusing neces-

faries to your body, and giving this advantage to your soul, than by a contrary proceeding.

Be devout to our Blessed Lady, and daily petition her to intercede for you to her Son, that you may never more commit what deserves such severe punishments.

*The fifth Meditation for the fifth Sunday.
Of Heaven.*

First Prelude. Imagine that above the Elementary Heavens, in which the sun, moon, and stars are fixed, is the Palace and Court of the King of kings, Almighty God, which he has built to entertain his Elect in.

Second Prelude. Beg his Divine Majesty to give you the Grace to conceive, in some measure, what he has there prepared for those that love and serve him.

I. POINT.

Heaven is a complication of all good, exempt from the least evil : where the body as well as the soul shall enjoy eternal happiness ; and that so great, that our imagination, tho' capable of framing great and mighty things, yet can frame nothing but what comes infinitely below, or is indeed nothing in comparison of Heaven. The most stately, most beautiful,

ful, and most magnificent Palaces of this world, if compared to Heaven, would be no more than the poorest cottages of mud. The Apocalypse describes it a city, the twelve gates of which are of pearl, the walls and foundations all of precious stones, the streets paved with pure gold, shining like chrysal. *O Israel, says the Prophet, How great is the house of God, and how vast the place of his possessions! my soul covets and fairs for the courts of our Lord.*

■ The power of God appears in his creation of the world; his mercy in the redemption; his justice in the punishment of the wicked; and his greatness and magnificence in the reward he gives his servants; which is so great, that neither eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor can it ever enter into the heart or mind of man to conceive what God has prepared for his Elect: So that though the Martyrs have suffered such terrible torments to gain it, and many of God's servants undergone such great austerities for the same effect; yet the Holy Scripture says it is given them for nothing, because all the sufferings of this life have no proportion with the glory prepared for it. We may better understand its worth by the blood which the Son of God has shed to merit it for us; whereas one drop was of an infinite value, he has shed it all to merit us that
glory;

glory ; so that we may say with truth, it is worth the life of God, and that none but God could merit it.

II. POINT.

Consider, that it is the seeing and enjoying God, which makes the compleat happiness of the blessed, because he is an infinite good, universal, eternal ; and, in a word, capable to content all our desires. The manner how we shall enjoy him is, as St. John says, we shall be like him ; that is to say, we shall be pure, holy, wise, powerful, happy, and perfect as he is. He will change and transform us into himself, not by destroying our being, but by uniting it to his, he will communicate to us his nature, his greatness, his knowledge, his sanctity, his felicity, his riches, by which we shall in some sort become God's, as the iron cast into the fire becomes fire.

Who can explicate the joy of a soul when she enters heaven and is united to her sovereign good ! O amorous transports ! O sweet embraces ! Well may she say, *I have found him whom my soul loves ; I will not let him go, he is all mine and I am all his.* The comforts and consolations which God will replenish her with, and the honour and glory he bestows upon her, can only be comprehended by himself, neither man nor angels
can

can conceive, nor express them. What a comfort will it be to have done and suffered much for God, and to have resisted all the temptations that would have drawn her from doing her duty, and, by consequence, would have deprived her of the happiness she enjoys, and will eternally enjoy. O my soul ! let us think what we have done and suffered for heaven, and what we will do for the future. We see what Christ and his Saints have done for it, and since it is given as a reward, we must merit it, life is granted for that end only.

III. POINT.

Consider that the body will also have its delights which consists in these four things: the Place, the Company, the Dowries of Glory, and the Durance of it, which is Eternity. As to the first, which is the Place, it is the Celestial Jerusalem, the Order, Beauty, Greatness, and Riches thereof, can neither be described nor conceived. Secondly, the Company. There will be an innumerable multitude of all nations, tribes, people, and tongues ! If it is so agreeable to live and converse with such as are noble, learned, and of agreeable conversation, how much more to have those angelical Spirits for companions, who are endowed with all manner of sciences ? Thirdly, Their bodies

dies will be glorified by the gifts of subtilty, impassibility, agility, and clarity : *Their bodies shall shine as suns in the kingdom of their Father.* Each sense shall have its delights; the sights shall be delighted with beholding the glorious bodies of the saints, especially that of Christ and his sacred Mother, the hearing with harmonious musick, &c. the heart will be filled with inexplicable pleasures! We shall see the secrets of God's Councils and of his Providence both over us and over others, and how he has loved and does love us. Our will, after an unspeakable manner, will adhere to God, and be as it were transformed into him by love; whence it will ever overflow with excess of joy, the vision and possession of God being a bottomless ocean of delights.

Though the Blessed will each moment enjoy the pleasures they are to enjoy for all eternity; yet, according to some Doctors of the Church, they will in some sort find new pleasures, as they advance in the vast extent of eternity: For, as St. Augustin very well remarks, they will always be replenished, yet never satiated; because tho' filled with God, each according to his capacity, yet they are never so satiated but that they will still desire to see and taste those delights more, and will find new satisfactions in them for all eternity. Good
God,

God, what an infinite recompence for the little we do for you ! St. Augustin says that God rewards and punishes like a God as he is ; if he does both according to his power, what must be the reward and punishment ? May we never be so unhappy as to lose the first and experience the latter.

Reflections and Resolutions.

If we can labour so much for a short miserable life, what ought we not to do for an eternal one ! how unjust is it to desire to have that for nothing, which has cost Christ and his Saints so dear.

If we patiently suffer the incommodities of this life, we shall enjoy the satisfactions of the next. Chuse in which you will enjoy it, for that depends on you : for you must not expect happiness here and hereafter.

If you desire true honour, and to render your name and memory famous, the secure way is to labour to become a Saint : the honour God does his Saints in Heaven, is incomparably greater than all honour that is rendered them upon earth.

If you desire to become a Saint, and to partake with them of eternal happiness, you must go the way they have taken, for no other will lead you to it. And this is certain

tain truth, that you must be either a Saint or a devil, and dwell for Eternity with the one or the other, there is no medium !

That you may attain to the first, frequent the Sacraments, think of, and be grateful to Christ for all he has done and suffered to merit that happiness for you : and beg him to apply his sacred merits to you, that so you may acquire it. Make daily recourse to our blessed Lady, to obtain you an entrance into the Kingdom of her Son : she never intercedes in vain for any. Lastly, endeavour to bribe the porters of Heaven, which, St. Justinian says, are the poor ; give them large Alms according to your abilities.

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SEVERAL METHODS
AND
PRACTICES
OF
DEVOTION:

APPERTAINING TO A
RELIGIOUS LIFE.

COLLECTED TOGETHER

BY THE

Right Hon. Lady LUCY HERBERT,

OF POWIS,

Superior of the English Augustin Nuns.

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SEVERAL METHODS
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CHAP. I.
OF PRAYER.
SEC. I.

The great advantages and benefit of it.

PRAYER is the means which God gives us to attain to our last end; and to that sanctity and perfection he has designed us. 'Tis of such profit, that a damned soul would suffer all her torments,

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ments, and twice as much, till the day of Judgement, to have the fruit thereof.

Our Holy Father, St. Augustin, says, 'Tis the key of all God's heavenly treasures. How much does our poverty and want of all good stand in need of such a key !

'Tis the channel by which God's graces are conveyed into our souls. 'Tis compared to Jacob's Ladder, by means of which our souls ascend to God ; we by it learning to know, love, and adore him ; and he descends to us by his graces, and the knowledge he gives us of our nothing.

As the body walks on its feet, so the soul walks towards God by her three powers in Prayer.

By Prayer our souls become the Kingdom of God, whose Throne raised in our hearts, is that of his mercy ; and God becomes to us what we please ourselves, as we do to him.

Prayer is, to a devout Christian, a bottomless treasure, so that he may say with truth, that in that one he has all other blessings. 'Tis by Prayer that God is moved to execute all those favourable designs his mercy has over us.

There is nothing that Prayer can ask, and Heaven can refuse ; neither relief to
the

the poor, nor comfort to the afflicted, nor victory to the oppressed, nor grace and pardon to sinners, nor any virtue to the just : in a word, whoever knows how to ask what he wants, can never want what he asks.

Prayer is the greatest blessing that Heaven can bestow ; 'tis a blank signed by Almighty God, wherein we may write what request we please, with a full security that it is granted, if we perform our part.

By Prayer only those graces are obtained, necessary towards the Salvation of most, nay of all, according to our Holy Father ; for the grace of perseverance is necessary to Salvation, and it is never given but to those who obtain it by their Prayers : for the Just could no more persevere without God's special assistance, than they could acquire virtue without his merciful grace.

Prayer brings a person to the perfection God calls her to : there is not a blessing of Heaven which flows not through that channel.

S E C. II.

Of the Necessity of Prayer, chiefly mental.

The Prayers Christ made for us, tho' of themselves so forcible; and the Sacrifices of himself offered for us, though of an infinite value; must be applied to us, or they will avail us nothing; and they are only applied to us by our Prayers and Sacrifices offered to him.

St. Gregory says that Prayer is the principal means that the Divine Providence makes use of to execute what God has designed us from all Eternity, but will not give us without being asked.

Unless we become persons of Prayer, we shall never attain perfection nor the love of God,

It is by means of Prayer that we reform what corrupt nature continually produces in our hearts; it is therefore called the murderer of vices and the nursery of virtues. If we find in our souls any passion or evil inclination which troubles her peace, it is in Prayer we must find a remedy, as well as to whatever may hinder our progress in virtue.

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As we are by our state obliged to tend to perfection, so consequently we are obliged to use mental Prayer, and, according to the progress we make therein, we may judge of that we make in perfection.

Food is not more necessary to maintain our corporal life, than Prayer is to maintain the spiritual life of our souls; which consists in knowing and loving God.

The reason, if there is but few Saints in religious Communities, is because few apply themselves to Prayer as they ought. A person addicted to Prayer, though without learning, and of few or no talents, shall produce wonders in advancing God's glory and drawing souls to him; whereas another with learning, and more talents, shall produce no such fruit.

A servant of God used to say, that by his Morning Prayer he could tell what the rest of the day would be; which shews the necessity of our well performing that duty.

Nothing will be a greater regret to us in purgatory, nay in Heaven, (if we could be capable of grief there) than not to have employed the time of Prayer
as

as we ought; since by it we might have obtained what we stood in need of, and enriched ourselves with all we wanted; God having promised to deny nothing that we should ask praying.

After Christ's Baptism, the Heavens were only opened when he prayed; to teach us that, after baptismal grace, no other is obtained but by Prayer, and consequently how necessary Prayer is.

S E C. III.

Of the Use we must make of Aridities and Distractions in mental Prayer.

We must first understand that the gift of Prayer is a gift of God, which is not acquired by human industry; but his Divine Majesty gives it, and that only to the humble, who persevere to present themselves before him with an intention and desire to do their best to please him, entirely abandoning themselves to his providence.

By the gift of Prayer is meant a facility to raise our thoughts and unite our minds to God; and to make solid reflections, conceive good affections, and
express

express ourselves to his Divine Majesty, by interior words and sentiments produced from the heart.

We must make a difference between the success of our Prayer and our application to it. The first depends no more on us, than the rain depends on the earth, but it depends on God alone. The second depends on us with the help of God's grace, we labouring as the sower does, but expecting the increase and growth only from God.

If God draws us to some affection as soon as we are placed in his presence, we must not fix ourselves to the points proposed, but follow that affection as long as we find ourselves drawn by it.

We must not lose courage nor be dejected, when so dry that our understanding cannot discourse of any thing, nor our will find any affection or gust; but in this case we ought, now and then, to lift up our minds to God by short aspirations; as for example :

We endeavour to discourse upon the first point of our meditation, and nothing occurs, let us lift up our minds to God and say, *O my God ! your will be done* ; then endeavour to discourse again, and if nothing

thing occurs, say, *My God, I wish I could love and serve you better.* Then try again, and if the same, say, *Dear Lord, you know what I am, for you made me : I would fain be able to entertain you, but my weakness and stupidity is so great, that I find myself incapable of being united to you in mind, or keeping my thoughts upon the subject of my meditation.*

This done, endeavour to bring back your thoughts with peace and quiet to the subject of your meditation ; forcing yourself to remain with respect and submission in the presence of God, kneeling humbly with your hands joined ; and if you still wander from the subject, and are as dry as before, produce again some such aspirations, till your time allotted for prayer is ended.

God is not displeased nor angry with us for the distractions we have against our will ; but rather has compassion of us and is pleased, if at the sight of them we humble ourselves, and endeavour to bring back our thoughts to him. And tho' we should be distracted a hundred times, we must not trouble ourselves, but sweetly put ourselves in his presence again, as if nothing had happened ; and never make reflections

reflections upon what distracted us, neither by interior lamentations or contrary acts, for that were to imprint them more in our mind.

Although, during the time of Prayer, we did nothing else but withdraw our minds from distractions, and sweetly replace ourselves in the presence of God, fixing our thoughts again on our subject of meditation; yet should we have employed our time not less profitably and meritoriously, than if we had been interiorly recollected the whole time, because we did what was in our power, and God, who requires no more, will not fail sooner or later to recompense our fidelity if we persevere in so doing, and that perhaps with the gift of Prayer.

This gift of Prayer is one of the greatest gifts that God bestows on earth to souls that are faithful to him; and those who know its value, will prefer it to that of Prophecy and working Miracles, and to all other gifts. That soul to whom God gives it, is rich for her life, and more rich than those who have the gift of knowledge, eloquence, and learning, for a person of Prayer is the object of God's complaisance;

complaisance ; it is with her he takes his delights.

But whatever degree of perfection we are arrived to, we must not of ourselves presume higher than the common sort of Prayer, which consists in meditation, affection, and good purposes, or resolutions : our study must be to labour courageously for solid virtue, and especially the mortification of our passions. As to a higher Prayer, God will raise us to it when he sees his time, and so much the sooner, as we seek it less, and remain in the humble knowledge of our nothing and unworthiness : it is then he will probably say to us, *Amice ascende superius.* Friend ascend up higher.

What we must seek in Prayer, is only God, and to pay our duty to him ; neither expect nor desire great lights, or such like favours, but only the pure love of God, and of his Cross. Commonly the greatest falls in Holy souls have been after the greatest consolations. Yet we must not contemn sensible devotion under pretence that it brings no solid virtue, for though this be true in effect, yet it helps much to virtue, and Saints have made great profit by consolations.

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This we must be convinced of, that Prayer without mortification is a meer illusion and fancy. It is by Prayer that we must learn to mortify ourselves, and therefore we must not esteem that time lost which has been spent in aridity and resisting distractions, for then we practise mortification, which is the fruit of Prayer.

The securest mortifications and penances, according to the testimony of several holy and experienced persons, is interior recollection and Prayer; so that few or none, if they consulted nature, would not rather employ the like time in the most painful corporal labour; because that so the natural liberty of thinking is thereby constrained, our appetite suppressed, our motions restrained, our will tied up, and our mind attentive not to give entrance to any thing that may distract or trouble the repose of our souls: in short, the whole is under a constraint which is very painful.

SEC. IV.

Of Preparation for Prayer.

Preparation for Prayer is absolutely necessary; without it we tempt God, as

the Holy Scripture says, by inconsiderately performing an action of so great importance; which Christ has merited for us with his precious blood and death, in order to attain to that degree of glory designed for us. This ought to raise in us a great confidence of obtaining what we want and pray for; and also a care not to mispend or lose so precious a time.

The Remote Preparation.

This Remote Preparation is first a high esteem of Prayer, often begging the gift of it. 2dly, Mortification, especially of our passions. 3dly, Purity of heart. And lastly, Interior recollection, elevating our thoughts to God from time to time.

Over night we should foresee the points we are next day to meditate upon, and endeavour to imprint them well in our mind; and see what bent and inclination we will endeavour to give to our hearts.

As we go to Prayer we may imagine those words of the Prophet spoke to us: *God expects you to do you mercy.* Let us dispose ourselves for it, in the spirit of Sacrifice, seeking only to content God.

SEC. V.

S E C. V.

What we are to observe in Time of Prayer.

This familiar comparison may instruct us how we ought to comport ourselves before Almighty God in Prayer, even as a blind person would do, if in the presence of the King : He does not see him, but as soon as he is told the King is present, he puts himself, and remains in a respectful posture. If the King does him the honour to call him, he approaches, and the firm belief that it is the King he speaks to, hinders him from thinking of any thing else. He forms in his mind no other idea but that of the King, and is wholly attentive to him. So in like manner ought we to behave ourselves in time of Prayer.

In that time our body must be composed in an humble manner, and our souls must come accompanied with faith, hope, and charity ; these will put it in the posture and situation which it ought to be in, in order to speak and converse with God.

Being on our knees, we must adore God present, and offer ourselves entirely to him, together with our Prayer; to his greater glory, and the accomplishment of all his merciful designs over us, and for whatever other intention or person we design to offer it.

Then beg the grace of the Holy Ghost, through the merits of Christ, and of his Sacred spouse the Blessed Virgin, and say, O my dear Jesus, I give you my heart to praise, adore, and love you; and I unite it with your intentions and affections, make me partaker of them, I beseech you.

We must always make two preludes; then Meditation, Affection, Resolutions, and Colloquies, which together compose mental Prayer. The chief acts to be made in time of it are, Faith, Hope, Charity, Adoration, Admiration, Praise, Thanksgiving, Confidence, Contrition, Diffidence in ourselves, Petition, and Resolution.

S E C. VI.

After Prayer.

We must, for the space of a *Miserere* or two, reflect upon our Prayer, to see in

in what we have been wanting. If we made our two preludes, and with what respect the first, and fervour the second. Whether our memory did its duty by endeavouring to remember the subject we were to meditate upon. And if our understanding were not deficient in discoursing upon the matter; or whether we strayed from it through negligence. If our will was not wanting in raising conformable affections. Lastly, What fruit we drew from our meditation, and when, and how we shall practise it.

Then return thanks to the Divine Majesty, for having permitted you to remain so long in his presence; and for all the graces he has bestowed upon you during that time. Beg pardon for all the faults you have committed, and the grace to practise what he has moved you to resolve on; sensible that of yourself you can do nothing.

Whatever fault you are sensible you have committed, endeavour to amend it in your afternoon's meditation, which, generally speaking, should be a repetition of the morning one.

S E C. VII.

Preludes which may serve for any Meditation.

1st Prelude. Imagine yourself at the feet of Jesus crucified.

The 2d Prelude, Is to beg of our crucified Saviour, light to understand the truth proposed, and the grace to form such acts and resolutions as may be most pleasing to him, and conformable to his Divine Will ; and may influence not only all the actions of the following day, but also of our whole life.

S E C. VIII.

A Second Manner when before the Blessed Sacrament.

The first Prelude is, To adore, with a firm Faith, Jesus Christ present in the Blessed Sacrament, who, when on earth, taught us by his own example the virtue we are to meditate on ; or else with his own mouth taught us the doctrine or truth proposed.

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The second Prelude is, To thank him for the example he gave us of it ; and to beg he will please to give us light to understand it, and grace to practise it the remainder of our life.

S E C. IX.

A Third Manner.

The first Prelude is, To cast a thought upon the whole subject of the Meditation.

The second, To ask of Almighty God, by a fervent aspiration, the virtue we seek by it.

S E C. X.

A Compendium of mental Prayer.

1st, Preparation has three parts, presence of God, choice of matter, and invocation.

2dly, Meditation has three parts, Consideration, Affection, and Resolution.

3dly, Conclusion has three parts, Thanksgiving, Oblation, and Petition.

SEC. XI.

S E C. XI.

Different Manners of Meditating.

The first may be to reduce our Meditations to these three points. The first point proposes the truth or precept. The second point is to reflect on what is to be done to reduce this precept to practice. And the third point is Petition, by way of colloquy.

In the first point we must endeavour to imprint in our heart and mind the truth proposed, weighing the motives, conceiving the importance, making upon it acts of faith, &c.

In the second point we must reflect upon the different practices, and chuse that which may best suit with our state and condition; foreseeing the different occasions we shall have of practising it, and resolving upon it, taking our measures accordingly.

The third point is, Prayer or Petition, which must come from the heart, and this not only during the time of meditation, but from time to time the rest of the day, which will serve not only to keep

keep us in the presence of God, but also will mind us of the resolutions we made in Prayer.

S E C. XII.

A Second Manner of Prayer.

Is to reduce our Meditation to these four following points.

The 1st Point must be all the motives than can raise an esteem or desire of the virtue we meditate on.

The second point is to reflect what one in our circumstances would do, that was resolved to obtain and practise that virtue.

The third point is to reflect whether we do so or no, and take a view of the faults we commit against it, with contrition for them.

The fourth point is to consider what we will do hereafter ; together with all the purposes relating to that virtue ; and earnestly beseech Almighty God to grant us the grace of it.

SEC. XIII.

S E C. XIII.

A Third Manner of Prayer, consisting in six Points.

1st Point, Is a simple view of the truth we are to meditate on, putting it before the eye of our mind, and by an act of faith believing it to be such as it is revealed to us.

2d Point, Is Consideration upon the same matter.

3d Point, Consists in Affections of the will.

4th Point, In Reflections on ourselves.

5th Point, In Resolutions.

And the 6th Point, In Petitions.

S E C. XIV.

A fourth Manner of Prayer when we meditate on a Command, Precept, or any Obligation.

1st Point, Is to consider the nature of it, and in what it obliges.

2d Point, How we have observed it, and in what we have violated it.

3d Point,

3d Point, Is to be sorry for the faults we have committed, and conclude with colloquies, heartily begging it of Almighty God, and beseeching our Lady to obtain it for us.

S E C. XV.

A fifth Manner, when we make our Meditation upon some Virtue.

1st Point, Is to give thanks for the example Christ has given us of that virtue in himself and in his Saints.

2d Point, Is to beg light to know the necessity, excellency, and advantages of it, and how we should practise it; taking a view of our faults against it.

3d Point, Is to purpose amendment, marking the time, place, and occasion of practising it, concluding with one or two colloquies.

The same is to be observed in meditating upon any sentence or maxim, for either it contains some virtue to be embraced, or some vice to be avoided.

If a virtue, 1st. its Nature; 2d. its Qualities; 3d. the Example of those who have excelled in it; and 4th. the contrary vice.

If

If a Vice, 1st. its Nature; 2d. its Causes; 3d. its Effects; 4th. the Wrong it does to God.

S E C. XVI.

A sixth Manner, considering the Faculties of our soul, or senses of our body.

1st Point, To reflect on the use of those Faculties.

2d Point, To see if we make that use of them.

3d Point, To ask pardon and purpose amendment, concluding with colloquies.

S E C. XVII.

A very profitable way of meditating by consideration of a Crucifix.

First imagine yourself at the foot of our Saviour's Cross, and having adored him, and prostrated yourself in mind before him, lift up your eyes and consider his five wounds.

At the right hand repass in your mind all the benefits you have received from his infinite bounty; they are the purchase of the Blood that runs from the Sacred Wound; thank the Divine Author.

At

At the left hand, consider the adversities and afflictions, which by his providence have happened to you ; express your grief for not having received them, as coming from his sacred hand, with due patience and resignation. Beg grace to do better for the future.

At the right foot, consider the good works you have done by means of the grace purchased for you by the merits of that Sacred Wound ; see if they are full, done with a pure intention, and consider what good you might have done, and have not, because you would not.

At the left foot, consider how injurious you have been to that Sacred Wound, in the many sins you have committed against God, your neighbour, and yourself, all which has pierced that foot you behold, and caused him more pain than the nail. Beg pardon and grace to amend.

At the Sacred Wound of the side, see what your desires and love are ; then at least open your heart, and fetch out of it affections of sorrow, love, and gratitude.

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SEC.

S E C. XVIII.

Another Manner.

After having prostrated yourself at the feet of Jesus, and paid him your respects, lift up your eyes, and consider all the parts of his Sacred Body one after another.

Then think of the pain and dolour he suffered in that part; as for example, in his hands, and that for the love of you. That thought will produce affections of sorrow, compassion, thanks, love, &c.

Then cast your eyes on your own hands, and consider the sins you have committed with them. Grieve, beg pardon, and purpose amendment.

Foresee the acts of virtue which you may perform with your hands for the love of Jesus, and purpose to do so in the first occasion. Beg the God of bounty to favour you with his grace.

After this manner you may pass over all the parts of his Sacred Body, making the same reflections, and reciting a *Pater* and *Ave* after each.

SEC.

S E C. XIX.

A Manner.

Which is by a simple view of the Mysteries of our Saviour's Life. As this is most easy, so it is most devout. You need only run over our Lord's life, stopping at the principal parts, and making acts of Faith, Adoration, Love, Contrition, Thanks, Offering, Petition, and Hope.

You must always observe the three following things: 1st, Not to look on the Mystery you meditate upon as past, but present, since it is so in the idea of God; and though the action is past, the virtue of it is not, nor the love with which Christ wrought it; for his love is infinite, immutable, and ever the same; and as ardent now, as when he gave his Life and Blood, being still ready to do the same if it were necessary.

2dly, If you find in any one mystery wherewithal to entertain yourself devoutly, go no further, but remain therein as long as your devotion lasts.

3dly, After each Mystery say a *Pater* and *Ave*.

In all Meditations the memory must remember the matter, and represent the points to the understanding according to the manner we have prepared them, making an Act of Faith touching the truth contained in them; then the understanding considers the persons, the nature, the place, the time, the end, the means, and the manner. And the will produces proper acts and affections.

S E C. XX.

To perform an Act of Thanksgiving well.

We must consider the person that bestows the gift, who is a God of an infinite dignity. 2dly, On whom he bestows it, to wit, on a poor miserable creature. 3dly, The value of the gift. 4thly, The love with which it is given. 5thly, The disinterestedness of the giver.

Then we must unite our thanksgiving with that which Christ in this world rendered to his eternal Father, for all favours bestowed on him, and on us all; and which he daily continues to render him in the most Blessed Sacrament.

SEC.

S E C. XXI.

The Manner of making Colloquies in Prayer.

A Colloquy is nothing else but a serious treaty with Almighty God, our Blessed Lady, any Saint, or our Angel Guardian, wherein the soul uses all the arguments she can to move and incline God, or his Saints, to be propitious to her; to which she is excited by her extreme need, and invited to have recourse to his Divine Majesty by these kind invitations. *Come to me all you that labour, &c. Knock, and it shall be opened, &c. Come and buy of me burning gold; come and you shall have it gratis. My delights are to be with the children of men. When I shall be exalted, I will draw all to myself.* All which evidently shews that God is desirous to give audience to a soul, if she humbly sues for it. 1st, In pleading, our first argument may be drawn from God himself, or from his power.

You can, O my God, do whatsoever you will. Were I able to effect that which you can by your will alone, I would instantly make myself wholly
 C 3 yours,

yours, and remain so for ever: shall I say this with truth, and yet be refused and rejected by you, when I know that you desire it more than I do? My God, I beseech you, break through those impediments which part us; and once for all make room for your mercies, and possess my soul now at least as you do the souls of your Elect.

2. A second way to move God to shew mercy to us, may be to expose to him our miseries, moving him to it after this manner.

If your mercy, my God, requires misery to cure, that you may shew the bowels of your compassion, who, alas! more miserable than I, that am misery itself, both in soul and body. Behold, therefore, in me an ample subject for your mercy to work on, for misery is the proper object of mercy.

3. A third means to move his Divine Majesty may be drawn from the natural inclination he has to do good to all. Beseech him to follow that inclination in your regard, since he is so much inclined to it; and his treasures, neither of light nor heat, will be diminished by his vouch-

vouchsafing to enkindle that black coal yourself with the same.

4. A fourth means may be taken from the merits of Christ in this manner.

I do not deny, my God, that I have offended you, and that I deserve nothing but darkness and destruction. But is it possible that my sins, how many or great soever they be, can anyways counterpoise the merits of my Saviour? Be pleased, therefore, to lay my sins, for which I deserve your wrath, in the balance against his merits, and you will see how much they out-weigh my crimes. Did I believe my sins greater than your Goodness and Mercy, as Cain did, there might be reason to confound me; but I declare on the contrary that your Mercy is incomparably greater: Therefore I beg you to receive the merits of your Son, and discharge me of all my Debts and Sins; where else can I possibly go, and who can help me but you?

5. A fifth manner of pleading may be to shew the title we have to all the treasures and merits of Christ's Life and Death, they being ours by his free gift. Let us reckon upon each of his Thoughts, Words, Deeds, Affections, Intentions,
and

and Motions, for the space of thirty-three years : those infinite treasures he stored up for us. We may urge how little of any of them will serve our turn, seeing that one only thought of his, or tear, or word, is of an infinite value, and sufficient for millions of souls. And to apply any of them to our necessities; there needs no more but one word, or *Fiat*, how easy then for him to do it !

6. We may make use of the merits of the Blessed Mother of God, producing all her titles of honour ; those in her Litanies are nearest at hand, and full of solid arguments, either to incline herself, or her dearest Son, to grant or favour our request. Nothing will move more than the affections of her heart, especially those she had when she accompanied her Divine Son in his Sacred Passion, and stood by his cross. With them we may buy of God what we stand in need of. It very much imports us to get her to plead our cause, for she never intercedes in vain ; because she can move her Son to apply his and the Saints merits to us, and thus enrich us if she pleases.

7. Another manner to move God to help us, may be to alledge what we are of ourselves,

ourselves, how unable to do any thing without the Divine assistance. Let us sink into the very bottom of our own nothing, and set before the eyes of our Lord, or his Mother, or his Saints, (according to the colloquy we make) the whole state of our soul, telling them how things go with us, and leading them through the powers of our soul, as thro' an hospital, letting them see how impossible it is for us to recover or subsist without their help, and what a fair occasion they have to shew their charity, their power, and their skill, perhaps not the like again in the whole world.

Here is to be noted, that in treating thus with our Lord, with his Mother, or with his Saints, many things may occur by way of objection, which may perhaps daunt or discourage a poor soul, if they be not well answered. As the memory of her many sins, her great ingratitude, her fair promises without effect, her extreme tepidity, and sloth in setting hand to work, some habitual imperfections of long continuance, which she seeks not to amend, or gives over as desperate; her diffidence in God's goodness, her want of a lively faith, a certain imagination
that

C H A P T E R II.

S E C. I.

Motives to raise in us a high esteem of the Divine Office.

THE Divine Office is a manner of Prayer peculiar to Priests and Religious Persons. It is ordained by the Holy Ghost, who governs the Church, for the employment of God's chosen people; that whilst the rest of men are employed in the various distractions of this life, they might be employed in praising, loving, thanking, and petitioning Almighty God, both for themselves and for others.

Another design of our Holy Mother the Church in it, is to imitate the triumphant Church which has, for its continual occupation, to praise God in loving him, and to love him in praising him.

We ought then to perform it with all the reverence a creature can pay to her God; and with all the love a created heart can yield, that being the employment

ment of Angels, and if we are not unhappy, will be ours for Eternity.

What a misery would it be if we should so perform what is ordained to gain our happiness withal, as to merit punishment; and in place of pleasing God, should offend him! for it is either a source of graces, or of misfortune, according as we perform it well or ill. What reward can we expect when the petitions we present are so delivered as to provoke God in place of pleasing him.

Saint Basil tells us the Divine assistance is not to be implored coldly, or with a wandering mind, for those that do so not only miss of the grant of their petitions, but incur his displeasure.

Saint Gregory assures us that God hears not the Prayers to which he who prays attends not: And the reason why so many Priests and Religious Persons remain still burdened with their defects, and make so little progress in perfection, often declining from bad to worse, is their performing this divine duty so negligently; for did they perform it as they ought, they would increase in grace, and thereby in all virtues and perfection.

To perform as we ought, we must do it for God, in God, and with God. It is not sufficient to be present in person, but the heart and soul with all our powers, must be applied to it; for not to perform it so, is to be rather *cryers* than *Prayers*.

We ought to look on the Divine Office as our greatest daily duty and employment, imposed on us by Supreme Power, and accepted of by us; so the performing it well, should be our principal care.

The name it bears shews the excellence of it. It is first called *Divine*, because it was inspired by the Spirit of God, and instituted to praise and worship him. And secondly, it is called *Office*, because it is the charge and office of Ecclesiastical and Religious Persons, whom our Holy Mother the Church deposes as Embassadors from her to Almighty God; to praise, love, and thank him; to beg his pardon, help, and assistance; supply and atone for several of her children who neither love, serve, nor praise him; and also to imitate the triumphant Church.

We may look upon ourselves not only as deputed by the Church, but also by our house and order, to praise God in
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the name of them all ; to beg pardon for their sins and offences, and the continuation of his mercies, and of the graces that are necessary for each. Be persuaded that part of the benedictions that God grants the order, are tied to the public Prayers performed in it. Our founders' design in obliging us to the Divine Office was, that those Prayers should have the force to draw God's Blessings on it ; have we not then reason to reproach ourselves that our negligent performing it is the cause, if God deprives the community of many graces and benedictions which he would otherways bestow ?

The Divine Office may be considered as a tribute which our tongue and heart pays to God ; and that which ought to raise our esteem of it is, that it is believed that Christ, when on earth, recited the Psalter according to the custom of the Jews : and when he was on the cross he began the 12th Psalm, *Deus, Deus meus ut quid dereliquisti me*, according to opinion he entirely ended.

We cannot do better than to unite ourselves to our Saviour, while we say or sing the Divine Office, begging him to

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present

present our Prayers and Praises with his own to his Eternal Father for his glory and the good of the Church; and at the same time let us beg him, by his all adorable heart, to supply for all the faults we have committed and do commit therein. This he revealed to St. Mechtilda, and St. Gertrude was very pleasing to him.

S E C. II.

Of the Remote Preparation for the Divine Office.

We perform the Divine Office ill, because we do not prevent it by such foreseen considerations as might take up our thoughts, and stir us up to fervour and holy affections.

Though we cannot help being distracted, yet we may be faulty in the cause of the distractions, by omitting to dispose ourselves for Prayer. Yet no other preparation is required, but only as we go to the quire from the first stroke of the bell, to recollect and excite in ourselves a reverential esteem of the duty we are called to perform, which is to speak to God, and that in the most sacred place upon earth,

earth, where God is present to give audience, and favour those that pronounce his praises.

We may reflect as we go, what care a person that was to have audience of the King would take to prepare what he was to say. We are happily void of that trouble, for our Holy Mother the Church puts into our mouths the words we are to speak, which are no other than the King's own words, to whom we are to speak. It was his Holy Spirit that inspired them; all he requires of us is, that our hearts join with the words, otherways his Divine Majesty will have but little regard to the words we speak, (though his own) unless he hears the cries of our hearts, by the desire of pleasing and honouring him.

To excite us to fervour for each part of the Office, we may, as we go to it, make use of these reflections. Going to *Mattins*, reflect with what fervour the same has been performed by several in the night; and if we are excused from performing it then, it is that we may do it with more fervour and alacrity, having had sufficient sleep; and as the design of rising in the night to say it was, that whilst worldlings took their rest, God's

Servants

Servants and Spouses should be employed in praising him, and atone for the sins and offences committed against him during the night, so that thought should stir us up to a fervorous performance of the same.

In going to *Prime*, let us raise in ourselves a great desire to perform it well, it being the first hour of the Day's Office, and may mind us of the first beginning of our life, from the time we had the use of reason, which ought to have been employed in serving God; and for not having done it, we must redouble our fervour, and enter into the sentiments of the Church, who, by the Prayers of *Prime*, begs for all her children, that God would not only preserve them from sins, but conduct them, and teach them to observe all his commandments, and sanctify their thoughts, words, and actions.

Tierce is particularly designed to render thanks to God for the sanctification of the Church by means of the Holy Ghost, who descended visibly upon the Apostles at that hour; and also to beg him to continue to animate it with his Holy Spirit.

When

When called to the two last hours, excite yourself to sentiments of gratitude, considering God's goodness to you in calling you from time to time to praise him: endeavour to do it with all imaginable fervour.

In going to Vespers reflect on the hour when Christ gave the greatest proof he could give of his love for us, by yielding up his life for our redemption, endeavour for to prove yours by a particular fervour in reciting this part of the Divine Office.

Complin being the conclusion of the Day's Office, ought to be performed with a double diligence, that it may atone for the faults we committed in the rest of our Office; as also to prepare our hearts, by true devotion, to end the day piously.

Our intention must be pure, we must be carried to this Divine Service only by the motive of God's glory, and not for the sensible satisfaction which proceeds from so holy an action.

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S E C. III.

The immediate Preparation for the Divine Office.

As soon as we enter the quire we must, with profound respect, adore God really present in the most Blessed Sacrament, uniting our adorations with those the Angels render him. Let us also offer him his own thoughts and divine operations, begging he will apply them to us, as he sees most for his own Honour and our Sanctification.

Having made your intention before you begin, beg the grace of Prayer of Almighty God, and invoking the Divine Spirit to pray in you, say, open my lips O my God, that I may bless your Holy name, and purify my heart from all that tends not to your service: enlighten my understanding, and inflame my will, that I may recite this office worthily, devoutly, and attentively, to the end I may deserve to be graciously heard by your Divine Majesty. I offer it united with the Prayers my Saviour offered you when in this world, and with those he now renders.

ders you in the adorable Sacrament ; and also with all those that are rendered you by the Saints and Angels in Heaven, and by the Faithful upon earth ; begging that the perfection of theirs may supply for the defects of mine.

In all vocal Prayers there are three sorts of attention which we may have : the first may be called material, the second spiritual, and the third Divine. The 1st is the least, which is to have attention to pronounce the words well, without missing through want of attention, or confounding one with another through precipitation, which suffices to fulfil the obligation of them that are obliged to the Divine Office, though it renders but little glory to God, and brings small profit to our souls. The 2d is to attend to the sense of the words, and this is more perfect and agreeable to God, and more profitable to ourselves, because it excites holy affections. The 3d and most perfect keeps the soul applied to God, to whom she speaks, either by considering some of his Divine Perfections, or some Mystery of our Saviour's Passion, so that the understanding admits of no other thought, nor the will of
any

any other affection, than to please, glorify, love, and thank God.

S E C. IV.

Several Manners of keeping our thought attentive to God during the Divine Office.

We may consider the Divine Office, 1st, As a Sacrifice of praise and homage to God. 2dly, As a Sacrifice of thanksgiving. 3dly, As a Sacrifice of impetration. And 4thly, As a Sacrifice of propitiation. One day in one manner, and another day in another, as it shall stand with our present disposition, and offering it up accordingly.

When we consider it as a Sacrifice of praise and homage to God, we must reflect upon his infinite greatness. He is the Fountain of Sanctity, and requires to be continually praised and honoured by all his creatures with all imaginable Sanctity. It is him we praise in this Divine Duty, and we thereby say to him all he would have us say. May we also say it as he would have us, that is what we must endeavour.

Secondly,

Secondly, We must reflect on the honour he does us, in not only permitting, but even calling us to praise him, which we ought to perform with all respect and fervour.

Those two reflections should make us perform the Divine Office with such an awful reverence as becomes a creature when she speaks to her God and Creator.

At every *Gloria Patri*, we must redouble our attention, and with all respect adore that Divine *Being*. One in Essence and three in Persons, from which all creatures receive theirs. We may also in reciting it reflect what those words import, to wit, that God may enjoy the same glory he had from all eternity, and will eternally have, which teaches us how great and independent of any creature God's glory is, and that the greatest honour we can render him cannot go beyond wishing that it may be as it was from all Eternity.

When we consider the Office as a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, we must first offer it for that intention, and during the time of it call to mind all the effects of God's Mercies and Liberalities to ourselves, and to the community we live in:

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and, so make of those praises a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving for the same. And this because it is an essential duty to thank God for his favours, and we have not otherways time to employ ourselves therein as we ought.

When we consider it as a Sacrifice of Impetration, we must offer it as such, making choice of one thing, or many, which we find the greatest want of, and are most moved to seek and find redress for. Our hearts, during the time, must, in the humblest and simplest manner, represent the same to God, whilst, with our mouths, we pronounce the Divine Office, which is appointed by the Church to beg of Almighty God, all that is necessary for her and for her children.

When we consider it as a Sacrifice of Propitiation, after having offered it as such, we must, during the time of it, raise in ourselves a lively apprehension of the greatness and multitude of our offences, which, according to the Psalmist, are more in number than the hairs of our head. Secondly, We must reflect on the Mercies of God, by which he pardons more willingly than he punishes; taking a pleasure to pardon such as with
sorrow

sorrow for having offended him, have recourse to him : let us conceive a hearty sorrow for all our offences against him.

Sometimes we may entertain our thoughts, during the Divine Office, with these three reflections, or with one of them, according as we find ourselves moved. 1st, God's Charity, by which he loves himself with an infinite love ; and then his creatures, communicating himself to them a thousand ways. 2dly, God's Justice, which causes him not to leave the least fault unpunished, nor the least virtue unrewarded. 3dly, His admirable and hidden Providence by which he governs all things, and conducts them to their end ; extending itself even to a leaf, and to a hair of the head, being present to all.

At another time we may entertain our thoughts with Christ present in the Blessed Sacrament. It is his proper Throne upon earth, where he seats his Holy Humanity to receive our homages. The honour we here render him ought to answer the opprobries and ignomies he received for us on the cross.

We cannot do better, during the Divine Office, than to keep ourselves united

to him, joining our thoughts and affections to his, begging him to present them to his Eternal Father, saying rather with heart than mouth, at the end of each Psalm or hour, I beseech you, dear Lord, to unite my unworthy Prayers with yours, and to present them so united to the glory of your Eternal Father.

At other times, according to the Feast we solemnize; we may entertain our thoughts in reflecting on God's Love, exprest to us in that Mystery, moving ourselves to sentiments of love and gratitude for the same, and offering ourselves to his Divine Majesty in return, or whatever we think he may require of us; and begging that the merits of that mystery may be applied to us.

We may also sometimes entertain ourselves during the Office with the matter contained in the seven Petitions of the *Pater Noster*, we may use one of them for so long as we find gust and satisfaction therein; or may change weekly, daily, or at every hour of the Office as they stand in order, for the number will correspond either to the days of the week or hours of the Office.

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The same method we may observe if we take for subject of our thoughts the seven words our Saviour spoke on the cross; which would be a fit entertainment for Fridays.

As many reflections may rather charge the imagination than help attention, it is more advisable to let our soul sweetly move towards God, making use of any one reflection which may keep us attentive to him, for as long as we find it does so. It were even to be wished that the whole Divine Office were but one Act of Love.

Notwithstanding it is advisable, and even necessary, to make choice of some one reflection or more, which may restrain and fix our vagabond imagination, it will cost us some pains to accustom ourselves to it; but it is a pain well bestowed and full of merit, being taken to glorify God with more reverence and attention.

On Feasts of our Blessed Lady, we may entertain our thoughts during the Office with some of those elogiums in her Litanies, or else with the words of the Angelical Salutation, Chap. v. Sec. 2, using one of those reflections during the

whole Office, or changing at each hour, as suits best with our present devotion and disposition.

When we have ended the Divine Office, we should always reflect a little how we have performed it; and beg pardon for the faults and negligences we have been guilty of, and grace to perform it better the next time. In satisfaction for our faults we should say the Prayer ordained by Pope Leo X. or else that which follows :

O Good Jesus, be propitious to me a sinner. I recommend to your heart, full of sweetness and charity, the Office I have now recited with so much tepidity, and so many distractions. Be pleased to pardon the faults I have therein committed, and to supply for my defect accept of your own merits, which I offer you, and in which I put my total trust and confidence.

In order to satisfy ourselves, we must understand, that although our minds should be so taken up with any of the foregoing reflections, or any such like pious thoughts, for many Psalms together, so as not to reflect on the Psalm, yet provided we say it, we should fulfil

our

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our obligation, and that with more perfection than if we only attended to them.

A servant of God used, at the end of every *Gloria Patri*, to add these words, *Pater Cælestis da mihi Spiritum bonum*. Celestial Father, give me your Holy Spirit.

C H A P. III.

S E C. I.

Motives to incline us to frequent visits of the most Blessed Sacrament.

ST. Theresia appearing to one after her death said, that Christ should be to us in the Blessed Sacrament what the Divine Essence is to the Blessed in Heaven, whose whole occupation is to contemplate, adore, and love, so should we comport ourselves to Jesus on our Altars.

Love and gratitude to Christ, whose love for us makes him remain constantly in our Tabernacle, should draw us continually to him. We may look on the Altar as the place where he every day is born, dies, and is offered in Sacrifice for us, applying unto us the fruits of the Blood he has shed for us.

Our

Our frequent visiting him in this his Throne of love is highly pleasing to him, because we comply with his desire, not an ordinary desire, but a vehement, ardent, passionate one, which he expresses by his remaining continually with us, and declaring that his delights are to be with the children of men. Ought not we then to delight in frequently visiting him who, for our sakes, descends from Heaven to earth, and that so frequently? What great matter is it for us to go from our cells, or from any part of the house to visit him, when not hindered by any regular duty?

The Queen of Saba thought it worth her pains to come even from the extremities of the earth, to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and shall we think much of going a few steps to visit Christ our Saviour, who remains in our Tabernacle for our sakes? If we are assiduous in visiting him, we shall undoubtedly receive from him what that Queen received from Solomon, of whom it is said that *He gave her all that she asked, or would.* Reflect a little on those words *asked, or would,* and consider what an advantage you may make by visiting him.

What

What could move Christ, after he had perfectly accomplished the work of our Redemption, to remain still upon earth? nothing but his love and tenderness for us, whom he knew to stand in need of him, as being sick, weak, afflicted, fearful of his judgements; and therefore he would stay with us that we might find in him a Father to comfort us, a Physician to cure us, a Master to teach us, and clear our doubts; a Redeemer to save us; are we not then infinitely blameable if we make not this use of him?

Before the coming of Christ, would any one have thought it possible that a God so great and dreadful, who was then called the God of vengeance, should, out of his pure love to us, not only become man like us, but also make himself our food and nourishment? if this be astonishing, as indeed it is, it is not less wonderful that we should be so insensible and ungrateful as to go seldom near him, when we might do it with so much facility.

Had it been in our choice to have asked some favour, or mark of Christ's love and goodness for us, could we have presumed to have asked such a favour as
his

his remaining for ever with us ? but what we should not have dared to ask, he has had the goodness to do, knowing how necessary his presence was for us ; which makes our ungratefulness in visiting him seldom appear the more.

What excuse can there be for religious persons, lodged under the same roof with Christ, if they do not frequently visit him, they having so many fair opportunities of doing it, and neglecting the same, is the reason why they do but creep, as it were, in the way of perfection ; because that is, of all others, the most powerful means to bring them to it, and that means they neglect. A religious man confess'd that nothing more sensibly afflicted him at his death than this.

As there is nothing more beneficial to us than frequently to visit the Blessed Sacrament, so there is no Devotion more pleasing to Almighty God, than our coming to visit and adore him in that his throne of love, which if we are careful to do, we may be assured we shall, thro' the merits of Christ, continue the same for all eternity.

There are an infinity of motives which oblige us frequently to visit Christ in the
most

most Blessed Sacrament, yet they may be contained in these few words, *We can do nothing without him; and with him we can do all things.*

S E C. II.

On visiting the most Blessed Sacrament.

It will be better and more profitable to our souls to make fewer visits to the Blessed Sacrament, (as three a day) and spend in each half a quarter of an hour, than to pretend to make more, and make them in a hurry. The properest time for them will be one in the morning, another in the afternoon, and the third before night. And, as much as may be, we should be constant to the time, unless for some just cause we are obliged to advance or defer our visits.

It is the pious practice of many, before they begin their prayers, to address themselves to their good Angel, begging him to join with them, and help them to pray well, which we may do in these or the like words :

O blessed Angel, my faithful Guardian,
you know much better than I, what re-
spect

spect and reverence is due to my Divine Saviour in this Sacrament of love ; you also know my obligations to him. I beg you to act the part of the best of friends to me, by requesting for me all I stand in need of, helping me to petition the same, and supplying for all my defects. Obtain my Saviour's blessing on my poor endeavours, that they may succeed to his honour and glory, and the good of my soul.

S E C. III.

Manner of visiting the most Blessed Sacrament for every day of the week.

On Sunday the first visit.

Consider Christ in the Blessed Sacrament as your Saviour. Reflect how many ways he has been a Saviour to you. Nothing is more powerful to gain our hearts than this amiable name, and the firm persuasion that he will be a Saviour to us. Therefore the enemy labours to make us doubt of it, thereby to diminish his love in us.

Our Holy Mother the Church assures us that he died for the Salvation of all.
With

With what love will this assurance inflame your heart ! make an Act of Faith upon this truth, and say,

O my God, I firmly believe that you truly desire my salvation, and died for it. Nothing shall ever make me doubt thereof. Since then you so much desire it, I confide you will grant me all that is necessary for it, and above all your love. For the hell you threaten me with, if I don't love you, has nothing in it so dreadful as that want of your love. Nor the Heaven you have prepared for me, if I do love you, has nothing in it so delightful as that love. Grant me but your love, and I desire no more. And since the accomplishing of your will, and observing your precepts, is the rule you give me of shewing my love, I beg your grace that I may be exact in every point of the same, that there I may truly prove I love you. Increase your love daily in me, I beseech you ; and if I am not worthy to die of it, at least I beg I may be so happy as to die in it, and that my last breath may be an act of love to you.

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After

After which, make these following Acts of Faith, Hope, and Charity.

My God, I firmly believe all that faith teaches me concerning your being an infinite good and infinite in all perfections, and I believe that I owe you all my love, all I am, and all I am capable of.

I hope and expect from your infinite goodness and mercy, the remission of all my sins, and all the graces I stand in need of to remain for ever faithful to your love, and to overcome all your enemies and mine.

An Act of charity after these two will be easily made: No matter in how few words exprest, provided it comes from the heart.

Then communicate Spiritually.

Though it be less efficacious than to do it Sacramentally, yet the good it procures us is so considerable, that we cannot omit it without doing a great prejudice to our own souls, for by it God bestows great graces on them.

If

If interest did not engage us as often as we visit the Blessed Sacrament, to receive Christ spiritually, love ought to do it: Since he remains there for our sakes, and expresses the desire he has that we receive him. To comply with it, we must dispose ourselves by an act of humility, and of contrition for our heart by an inflamed desire to receive him, that he may enter and we be united to him.

*After which say the following Prayer,
which St. Gertrude daily recited in honour
of the Heart of Jesus.*

I adore you, O Sacred Heart of Jesus, Source of Eternal Life, Treasure of the Divinity, Furnace of Love. You are my only Refuge! O amiable Saviour, inflame my Heart with that love which yours is inflamed with. Pour into my Heart those graces, of which yours is the Source; and grant that my Heart may be so united with yours, that your will may be mine, and that mine may be eternally conformed to yours; which from henceforward I beg may be the rule of all my desires and actions.

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*The second Visit for the same Day.
In the Spirit of Confidence.*

Go to your Saviour with sentiments of an entire confidence ; as to the certain remedy of all your evils, and source of all your good ; for whatever situation or state your soul is in, you will draw great advantage if you thus visit him. Our Holy Father says there is no mortal sin, however horrible, which the death of Jesus cannot blot out. I cannot, says the same Saint, be frightened at the multitude of my Sins, if I call to mind the death of Christ, for that can do more for me than my sins can do against me. In all my adversities, says he, I never found a more efficacious remedy than to have recourse to the wounds of my Saviour, in them I repose without fear.

We cannot entertain ourselves better, nor please our Saviour more, than by exciting in ourselves a perfect confidence in him, asking it of him, and a heart conformable to his, that may always trust and confide in him.

Having excited yourself to this confidence, make the acts of Faith, Hope, and
Charity,

Charity, then Spiritual Communion.
And St. Gertrude's Prayer as in the first
Visit.

*The third Visit for the same Day, which
may likewise serve for the third Visit of
every Day.*

*It is to confer with our Saviour about all
our affairs.*

Go to Jesus in the most Blessed Sacra-
ment, to open your heart to him, and to
tell him all your concerns, as to your Fa-
ther and best of friends. Speak to him
of your spiritual concerns, and likewise
of your temporal ones, for he is not tired
with hearing our complaints and miseries.
Speak to him of what passes in your
interior. Of the sins and faults you com-
mit, notwithstanding your purposes to
the contrary. Of the violent propensions
of your corrupt nature, which causes
many evils. Of the passions and incli-
nations which trouble you, &c. And
you will doubtless experience the same
goodness which they did, who addressed
themselves to Christ for their bodily ma-
ladies when he was upon earth. Say to

F 3

him

him with the leper, *Lord, if you will you can cure me.*

If any one has offended you, tell him of it, and learn of him how to comport yourself towards the person. If any particular thing is to be done, consult with him about it; beg his assistance and blessing on it. And when ended, if it succeed, thank him for it, and render him all the glory of it. If it did not succeed, make to him an entire sacrifice of your will and desires, submitting yourself to his will, and judging that to be best which he ordains; which if you really do, you will gain more than if it had succeeded to your mind.

If you find yourself oppress'd with melancholy, or if any afflicting accident has happened to you, or any temptation, have recourse to Jesus, seek your solace and comfort in him alone, and tell him you expect help from no other.

Finally, in all your difficulties, have recourse to him.

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of you
mind

Acts of Faith, Hope, Charity, spiritual Communion; and as before, after the first Visit.

S E C. IV.

On Monday the first Visit.

Go to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament as to your Pastor. Consider the love he expresses for each of his flock, how he seeks to maintain their lives, and make them happy. He assures us that he loves us as his Father loves him. Ask him, but ask it from your heart, that you and all the community may for ever be of the number of his sheep.

Grant, dear Lord, this favour, since I am sure you desire it; content then this your desire by granting it. It is what I confide, and hope you will; and let not the force of our common enemy take any of us out of your hands. Reform, dear Lord, the deformity of my soul, and no longer suffer any thing to remain in me that displeases you. Employ me according to your merciful designs over me, and give me the grace promptly to conform

form myself to them, and to sanctify myself, and those that are under my charge, by perfectly fulfilling all the duties of my employment, to the greater glory of your name.

Inspire me with those sentiments of love and tenderness for each, which may resemble that you have for them; that after having laboured with you on earth for their Salvation, I may, for recompence, enjoy you for ever in heaven.
Amen.

Acts of Faith, Hope, Charity, as before.

The second Visit on the same Day in the Spirit of Zeal.

Your Sacred heart, dear Jesus, in this adorable Sacrament, burns with an inexplicable love for all men; and therefore I am persuaded that I cannot please you more, than in petitioning you in favour of miserable sinners, whom your enemy holds under the Captivity of sin, and in imploring your mercy for Heretics ignorant of our faith. Remember, Lord, that they are the work of your hands, and created to your image and likeness.

likeness. Hell is filled with them to the dishonour of your name, though you have shed your blood and died for their salvation. Dear Lord, let yourself be overcome by the Prayers of our Holy Mother the Church. Forget and forgive their sins and infidelities, and in satisfaction, receive all you suffered for them on the Cross. Grant them the spirit of penance, and grace to amend their lives, and to love and serve you the rest of their days.

I also petition your mercy in favour of the poor souls whom you love so tenderly, and so much desire their solace. They being detained in purgatory, are hindered from loving and glorifying you, as they would if they were in Heaven. It is on that account I beg their deliverance, and to obtain it I offer you all the merits of your Passion and Death, and the precious Blood you have shed for them, which I adore in this Divine Sacrament.

There is not a more efficacious means to partake of God's liberalities than to press him for our neighbour, whether living or dead ; so charitable a proceeding opens the heart and hand of God, to replenish us with his graces and blessings.

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Acts of Faith, Hope, and Charity, as above.

Third Visit as above also.

S E C. III.

Tuesday—First Visit.

Go to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, as to your Judge. Tell him the terror you have of being judged, not knowing whether you are worthy of his love or hatred ; not being certain if you love him as he requires of you. But tell him, if to be of the number of his friends, it is sufficient truly to desire to be so, you have some reason to hope you are, since you really desire to love him above all things.

But, dear Lord, whether my heart will remain constant to your love, to my last breath, is what I am not certain of ; the uncertainty of which makes me tremble. It is you only that can give me that assurance, by giving me such a love that no waters of tribulation may extinguish.

It is to obtain that favour of your mercies that I approach your Holy Altar,
which

which is properly the tribunal of those mercies, thereby to be enabled to appear with assurance before the tribunal of your justice. Here in place of bidding me receive, you ordain me to approach, saying, *Come to me all you that are burdened with the heavy weight of your sins, and I will ease and refresh you.*

Acts of Faith, &c. as above.

*Second Visit for the same Day.
In the Spirit of Love.*

Go to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament to express your love to him, for the many marks he gives you of his, especially this of remaining for ever with you. Beg him to inspire you with sentiments of his love, worthy of himself. If you find your heart so dry that you cannot make such an act of love as you wish to do, offer him all the love with which he is loved by all the Blessed of Heaven.

It will be time well spent if you employ yourself in begging of him the grace to love him and his eternal Father perfectly in this life, and eternally in the next. But ask it with an entire confidence,

dence, not doubting to experience the truth of his words, who assures us that if we ask we shall receive.

Grant then, dear Jesus, that I may love you in this Sacrament, as much as I am beloved by you. Be wholly yours, as you are wholly mine. Hear my Prayers—pity my Sighs—hearken to my Petition. You command me to love you. Alas! you know my weakness and incapacity to do it as I ought. Give then what you command, and command what you please. Employ your omnipotent hand to destroy whatever opposes it in me, as self-love, which I beg you to annihilate in me, that your love alone may reign in my heart.

Acts of Faith, Hope, &c. as above.

Third Visit as before.

S E C. VI.

Wednesday—First Visit.

Go to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament as to your Lord and Sovereign, whose power is infinite, he can with all imaginable

nable ease do whatever he will, for to *will* and to *do* is the same thing with God. Rejoice thereat, and that his goodness is equal to his power.

Dear Lord, what comfort for my poor soul, which you seem to have created so miserable, only that you might have the satisfaction to draw me out of it, and to shew your mercy to me. Behold then all my miseries and necessities; see how I am surrounded with enemies without and within, by my Passions and vicious inclinations which tyrannise over me. Behold sufficient matter both for your power and mercy to work upon; for no less a power than yours can change me from what I am to what I ought to be; nor can a less mercy will it: Say but the word, and I shall be victorious, and for ever happy.

Acts of Faith, Hope, &c. as above.

The second Visit for the same Day.

By way of amorous Complaints.

How comes it, dear Lord, since you are so merciful as to remain constantly on our Altar to do me good, that I am still

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what I am, poor, and in want of all things? It must be that I know not how to make use of so powerful a means as I have in you; for in you is contained a remedy for all my evils. You are that Physician whose power and skill cures all diseases. If then I am still sick and wounded, the fault must be my own, since you are willing to cure me. Teach me, dear Lord, where it lies, that knowing it I may correct it.

It is not that I am ignorant of your love and tenderness for me, and consequently have but small confidence in you, though you remain for ever here that I may find in you a powerful Protector, a Father, a Physician, and the best of friends. Make me then know you better that I may love you more; for to love you but little is not to know you; and knowing you, may I confide in you, and make recourse to you in all my necessities.

Acts

*Acts of Faith, Hope, &c. as above.
Third Visit as above also.*

S E C. VII.

Thursday—First Visit.

Go to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, as to the Soul's Food in life, and viaticum at death. This Divine Food comes from Heaven, and will conduct us thither.

Good God, is it possible that the recompence of Saints, the joy of Angels, the Eternal Word should make himself the Food and Nourishment of my soul! What can I desire more? Nothing, dear Lord, but that I may correspond with such a love, and ever worthily dispose myself to receive you, until I happily arrive to you, for the strength of this Divine Sacrament can make me walk in the way of perfection during life, and open to me the gate of Heaven at my death.

Grant, dear Lord, that your presence in this adorable Sacrament, at the hour of my death, may dissipate all fears which the enemy and my sins may then cause in me, and give me due dispositions to re-

ceive my viaticum with an humble and assured confidence in your goodness and mercy ; and in the promise you make me, that if I eat your flesh, and drink your blood, I shall live for ever. Let your goodness in then visiting me give me a fresh assurance of it, and make me leave this world with joy and comfort.

Acts of Faith, Hope, &c. as above.

Second Visit for the same Day, in the Spirit of Gratitude.

Reflect that Christ descends from Heaven to earth expressly for your sake alone, as often as you communicate, foreseeing that in such an host (into which he enters) you will receive him : This he does with a design to sanctify you, and to enrich you with his graces, being in that host only for you, and there he prays and offers himself to his Eternal Father for you ; and his heart burns with love for you, and with a desire of inflaming yours.

Dear Saviour, what obligation have I to you ! and how can I sufficiently thank you for being thus pleased to think on me, and to work such wonders for my sake ?

fake? I offer you in return all the thanks that are rendered you by the Blessed in Heaven, and by your servants on earth. What can I wish for more than you have done? Nothing, but that you would please to bid me come to you, for knowing myself unworthy, I dare not other-ways approach. And this you also do, saying, *Come to me all you that are burdened, and I will refresh and ease you.* This being, I will not fear to approach and receive you, since I have your orders for it.

Whilst I may thus approach to you and receive you in this Divine Sacrament, no loss shall afflict me; for in you I have all that is, or can be necessary for me. Grant I may, in some sort, merit this effect of your love, by suffering and labouring for your glory in this adorable Mystery. And since your food in it is the virtues of our souls, and the love and honour we pay you, when we receive you, my chief care shall be to prepare my soul for that happiness.

Acts of Faith, Hope, &c. as above.

Third Visit as above also.

S E C. VIII.

Friday—First Visit.

Go to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament as to your soul's Lover. His love for us is unmeasurable, remaining continually with us, desiring to communicate his benefits, and unite himself entirely to us. A life of thirty-three years spent for our service seems too short to him, and therefore he works the greatest of miracles, to satisfy the greatest of desires. He is pleased to say, his delights are to be with the children of men, and he makes it appear in this adorable Mystery.

My dear Redeemer, is it possible that you should love me, your unworthy creature, to such an excess, as to give yourself wholly to me? Have you then forgot my offences, and the ill treatment you have received from me, when so good as to visit me? You hate sin infinitely, yet you hate it less than you love me. O

— Divine

Divine heart of my Saviour, worthy the love of all hearts ! I consecrate mine to you ; fill it with your love, that so it may be worthy of your acceptance, and let your heart be touched with my miseries, the greatest of which is, that I so little love what is so infinitely amiable. But since you desire to unite yourself to me, unworthy as I am, by this heavenly Mystery, which is a Mystery of union, effect it to your glory.

Acts of Faith, Hope, &c. as above.

The second Visit on the same Day, in the Spirit of Praise.

O my sovereign Lord, it is impossible for me to praise you as I ought, for that incomparable love you express for me in this Divine Sacrament, making yourself my food and nourishment in this life, and my recompence in the next. And for all the graces and favours you have done me, and are continually ready to bestow upon me ; therefore to supply for my inability, I offer you, in return, all the praises that have been, are, and will be rendered you for all eternity.

Blessed

Blessed Angels and happy Saints, I most humbly beg you to praise, bless, and glorify my Sovereign and yours in my behalf. Give him, I beseech you, the honour I ought to pay to his Divine Majesty; and I, with my whole heart, join and unite my intention to all the love, adorations, and glory you shall ever give him for a whole eternity.

Then remain in silence, admiring his Perfections and the Prodigies of his Love exprest in this Sacrament. For one of his Prophets speaking to him says, *Silence, my God, is one of the things that praises you most loudly.*

Acts of Faith, Hope, &c. as above.

Third Visit as above also.

S E C. IX.

Saturday—First Visit.

Go to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, as to your Master, humbly beg him to teach you all that is necessary for you to know, or that he would have you to learn.

Great

Great God, grant this favour to your poor creature, speak to my heart in this visit, and teach me all you would have me do. For I should make more profit in perfection, if, in place of others, you would speak to me yourself; for that is soon learnt which you teach. Speak then, dear Lord, and teach me all that belongs to my duty and charge: make me learn to do it well; for you only can give sense and understanding to your scholars. Make me not only learn, but retain whatever you shall teach me, that so I may faithfully practise it.

And since you are pleased to remain continually with me, I will, before I go to others, come to you for instructions. But if, Divine Master, I am not quick at learning, or forget what I have learned, pardon and pity my weakness, and have patience with me.

Acts of Faith, &c. as above.

The second Visit for the same Day.

In the Spirit of Poverty and Want.

Christ, in the Blessed Sacrament, is infinitely rich, wise, and powerful. If, as
Holy

Holy Scripture tells us, the Queen of Saba went from the extremities of the earth to see the riches, and hear the wisdom of Solomon ; and if he gave her all *she would* and *asked*, besides what he, out of his Royal Munificence, presented her; What may you hope for ? make your reflections upon all this, and confide the like will be your lot. With his riches he will enrich you ; with his wisdom he will enlighten you, solve your doubts, and clear your difficulties ; and with his strength he will defend and fortify you against your enemies.

Say to his Divine Majesty, Lord, behold here a miserable Creature, indigent and beggarly, and an object of pity. The least sign from you will make me happy, and you will lose nothing by enriching me. Give me plenty then, for my wants are great, and I cannot be satisfied with a little ; nor is it glorious to your name to give sparingly. Let your gifts be worthy of the giver. Bestow upon me your love, your grace, your fear, and a zeal of your glory, and of the Sanctification of my Soul. It will redound more to your glory to enrich me with these gifts, thereby to
save

save me, than to ruin me by the refusal of them.

Acts of Faith, Hope, Charity, as above.

The third Visit as above also.

Besides three Visits each day, you cannot do less to comply with the persevering love of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, than to visit him from time to time as occasion will permit, though but for a moment, as at one time to adore him, another time to offer him your heart, and the hearts of all the community. Another time to beg his blessing for yourself and for those under your care. At other times to thank him for remaining continually with you. Then to beg he will make himself be as much beloved and honoured, in the adorable Sacrament in this house, as he is in any place upon earth.

In these sort of Prayers which we make in our Visits, and which are properly called aspirations, St. Francis, of Sales, would have us pronounce them rather with heart than with mouth; and he adds, that those which love suggests to

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us upon the spot will be the best and most profitable.

CHAPTER IV.

Of the presence of God.

S. E. C. I.

How advantageous it is to keep ourselves in his presence.

THE exercise of the presence of God is the principal and most important of all other exercises of devotion. It is what gives life and motion to the rest, without which they will neither have force nor vigour.

It is that which makes the Just Man, guards the Just Man, and feeds the Just Man. There are but few that arrive to the perfection of this Holy Practice, because they meet with many difficulties which few have the courage to overcome. This exercise is the very root of all our spiritual good, by means thereof a soul becomes rich in grace and virtue.

It happens sometimes, that notwithstanding the desire we have of keeping ourselves

ourselves in the simple view of God's presence, we find great tediousness and disgust in it; but this must not hinder us, for our motive in doing it ought to be purely to please God, and not to satisfy self-love, which would always find some relish or support, as well in exercises of Piety as in other things.

Peace is so necessary in order to this exercise, that we must always endeavour to keep our soul in peace, being ever upon our guard to admit of no disturbance, whatever happens to us, turning from all that may disquiet us as from a malignant vapour, and establishing ourselves in a firm and solid tranquillity, which makes us capable of all good, and without which we are capable of none.

Inquire Pacem & persequere eam. Seek Peace and follow it with great care.

In omnibus requiem quæsi. I have sought peace in all things, and have endeavoured to possess an unshaken one in all events.

Summus sapientia finis est ut simus mente tranquilla. The end of wisdom is to keep our mind always in peace, and conserve ourselves in an inviolable tranquillity.

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Hæc est Vita consummati perfectique Sapientis. It is the life of the wise and perfect.

As peace is necessary in order to our keeping ourselves in the presence of God, so a lively faith of his presence and protection is the means to keep a soul in peace in the midst of troubles and pains. But we must understand that there are two sorts of peace; the one is accompanied with sweetness, in which case it is easy to be faithful to God and practise virtue. But the other sort of peace is full of bitterness, interior pains and disgusts, which afflict a soul, notwithstanding she enjoys peace. This *Peace*, as holy Scripture calls it, is full of bitterness, and consists not in tasting the sweets of peace, but in suffering troubles, agitations, and interior pains, with an humble submission to the will of God; and this peace is incomparably more meritorious and sanctifying than the other. A soul agitated and tormented, without comfort from God or man, is sustained only by her Faith in God's presence, by which she keeps herself faithful to him in her duties, and submissive to his will; seeking purely to content him, without knowing she

she does it. She is tormented by temptations, dryness, and disgusts in the exercises of Piety, so that she becomes a horror to herself, as thinking she is so to Almighty God, to whom in the meantime she is most pleasing; for by such trials he renders her more worthy of his love.

The presence of God is an habitual belief that God is present, and an elevation of our heart and mind to him by means of aspirations; the frequent use of which will both serve to keep us in his presence, and to bring us back again when we are strayed from it. These aspirations or ejaculatory Prayers are judged not only beneficial, but necessary to keep us from committing sin. They also comfort us in our afflictions; for the greatest consolation in this exile is to think of God, who is the source of all comfort. They render our actions supernatural, our days full of merit, and your lives worthy of God; making us live to God, of God, and continually in God's presence. And as his Divine Majesty has his Eyes always fixed on us, so the soul, by means of aspirations, turns her's towards him.

By the frequent use of this exercise we practise diverse virtues, according to the diversity of our aspirations. The fire of God's love is kindled and maintained in our hearts. The spirit of devotion is acquired. It prevents sin from entering, or drives it out again, if entered. It gains the heart of God, and as it were ties him with a hair, that is, an assent of our thought.

As for the aspirations, they may be either what God then inspires us with, or what we have drawn from our morning meditation, or any that moves us most.

The times most necessary of using them are at the beginning, middle, and end of each action, and when the clock strikes.

The interior occupation of a soul with God is a special privilege of his grace, and depends on his mercy. It is not what we can attain to by any industry of ours. We must ask it of God by means of Prayer; for all our endeavours, without his help, will avail us nothing. We must daily beg of Almighty God that he will please to grant us the grace frequently to remember his Divine presence,
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and that with due dispositions of heart; an interior adoration and tender affection.

Let us also beg our good Angels, who never lose sight of God, to mind us often of his presence, and obtain us the grace to increase thereby in his Holy Fear and Love.

S E C. II.

A Practice of the Presence of God, by means of Faith, Hope, and Charity, and Conformity to his Divine Will.

It is of very great importance to be persuaded that our perfection and happiness consists in the union of our souls, and its faculties, with memory, and understanding, with God, by Faith, Hope, Charity, and Conformity to God's Will.

The most noble, profitable, and perfect action we can do in this life, or in the next, is to unite ourselves to God, and to his Divine Son Jesus Christ, because by this union (according to the Doctrine of the Saints) we become one Spirit with God. Now the most efficacious means we have of doing this, is by Faith, Hope, Charity, and Conformity to his Will; and therefore the practice of
 you H 3 these

these virtues ought to be very familiar with us, and in a manner continual; or perhaps we may reap more advantage by taking one at a time for practice, and so change every month, beginning with the first in January, by which we shall have three separate months in a year for each of the four virtues.

S E C. III.

The Properties and Excellence of Faith.

Faith is the foundation, root, source, and measure of all other virtues; as much as we have of Faith, so much we shall have of Hope, of Charity, of Conformity to God's Will.

Faith is the virtue which is most pleasing and glorious to God, because it sacrifices the most noble faculty of our souls, to wit, the understanding. It is the most powerful of all other means to obtain what we desire, according to our Saviour's own words, *There is nothing impossible to them that have Faith.*

It is under the standard of Faith that all the other virtues rank themselves to fight their enemies. It is in that fortress they

they retire to defend themselves by a generous resistance against all the attacks of the enemy.

It is Faith that makes the just man prefer the service of God to any interest of his own. Without Faith, Charity cannot subsist, because Faith shews us how amiable God is, which makes us love him.

The blossom that precedes the fruit, and the foundation which supports the whole Edifice of all the other virtues.

S E C. IV.

The Practice of Faith.

1st, We must believe with a pure, blind, and naked Faith, all the mysteries of our Holy Religion, and the truths, speculative and practical, revealed by God.

2dly, We must believe them incomparably more than all that appears evident in nature.

3dly, And although the world should doubt, yet we should resolve to live and die in that belief.

Then

- Then we must descend to some particulars. One of the most important is, the presence of God in all places. His providence over us, and care of us. For if we firmly believe that God looks on us, hearkens to us in all times and places, has a continual care and providence over us, continually thinks of us, and in all occasions is attentive to our wants and necessities, and has a more than paternal affection to conduct us to our beatitude, it will breed in us an unshaken confidence in God, and a tender filial love for him, and a high esteem of his conduct, though never so contrary to the sentiments of nature.

In omni loco oculi Domini contemplantur bonos & malos. The eyes of our Lord in all places contemplate the good and the bad.

Servavi mandata tua, & testimonia tua, quia omnes viæ meæ in conspectu tuo. I kept your will because I reflected that I was in your presence, and that all my works were exposed to your eyes.

Naked Faith is something painful to beginners, because the interior part and senses have no share therein, but seek to render sensible that which is spiritual, and
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to reduce to experience that which belongs only to Faith. This is the weakness of our nature, which would fain feel things sensible. We must have patience with it ; but not yield to it, but remain firm in the superior part of our souls by naked faith ; firmly believing that God is present, though we have not any experience of it in ourselves ; not so much as a good thought, nor any good sentiment, nor consolation, having in this no support but in Faith, by which we keep ourselves united to God present.

Thus raising ourselves above nature in the simple union of the Divine Presence, without seeing, relishing, or receiving any agreeable effects of it ; content to believe God present, without seeking any other assurance, neither more light nor more consolation than he thinks fit ; nor that he should manifest himself any other way than as he pleases.

The best means of keeping ourselves thus united to God, is that of aspirations, which we ought, at least, to make every half hour, or at farthest every hour. And though they are performed in a moment, their fruit is everlasting.

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If we have not drawn any from our morning's Meditation, nor are not inspired by Almighty God with any particular one, we may make use of some one of the ensuing aspirations; and at the beginning and end of all our actions, adoring the Blessed Trinity present, refer it to the glory of the Divine Majesty, by the *Gloria Patri*, &c.

Upon both which we must make our particular examination, and be exact in marking down how often we have failed in the morning, and how often in the afternoon; for that will be a means to make us more faithful.

It must also be the virtue or fruit we draw from our Meditations; and we must heartily beg it of Almighty God in all our Prayers and Communions, the month that we pretend to make it our practice; being sensible that all endeavours will never obtain it unless he is pleased to give it to us.

Lastly, We must, once a Week, as long as we aim at making it our practice, read it over, and reflect for a quarter of an hour upon all that is here set down for that effect.

Some

Some proper Aspirations for this Intent.

My God, you always behold me, grant I may never cease to love you.

O my God, you are here present, grant me the grace never to offend you.

God of my heart, make me what you would have me.

Great God, draw my heart entirely to you.

God of goodness, have mercy on me. My God, save your poor creature; let not my soul be lost which has cost you so dear.

Lord, make me perfectly love you, and always obey you.

My God, your goodness is infinite, and the love with which you love me is from eternity. You are my portion and my inheritance, I desire nothing besides you.

S E C T I V

The way of keeping ourselves united to God, by the virtue of Hope.

This virtue makes us hope in God, and of God the possession of all good.

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and a deliverance from all evils, both those of this life and of the next; this hope is founded on his goodness, the fidelity of his promises, and the merits of Christ. As this virtue has regard to God alone, from whom we expect succours and remedy to all our necessities, it is pure and naked, and shutting our eyes to all that weakens it, whether from ourselves or from creatures, it may be called blind.

The Properties and Excellence of Hope.

First, It is very pleasing to Almighty God, and does truly honour him; because it purely proceeds from the great esteem we have of his goodness.

It procures immense treasures; for it obtains of God all that it asks, and gives courage to overcome difficulties, because it leans upon the power of God, and confers on our souls an eminent perfection.

It creates in us a great confidence in the Divine Majesty, whom we believe present, which thought raises our dejected Spirits, and inspires joy. It is all our consolation we have in our exile.

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What should we do in this World, if we did not think of the God of comfort and Father of mercies? as such he is moved with our miseries. He knows the state we are in, and what troubles us; and can and will help us, if, considering him present, we make recourse to him with confidence. My God, says our Holy Father, *You love me too much to abandon me. It is sufficient that you know my necessities, to convince me that you will do whatever is best for your Glory and my good.*

Non timebo mala quoniam tu mecum es :
I will not fear the evils which surround me, because you are with me to sustain and deliver me.

Quoniam in me speravit liberabo eum; protegam eum quoniam cognovit Nomen meum. I will deliver him and protect him, because he knows my Name; that is to say, because he looks on me, and honours me as his Father. He shall have recourse to me, and I will hear him. I will be with him in his tribulations, and deliver him.

You men of little Faith, said our Lord, Why do you doubt, since I am with you. This he said to his Apostles, and the
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same he says to each of us, being present *every* where. Fear nothing but to confide in my goodness, for nothing can hurt you as long as you confide in me. What a comfortable assurance !

The Practice of Hope.

1st, We must firmly hope that God will give us all that he has promised us. And this we must hope with a pure, naked, and blind Hope.

2dly, We must hope it with an unshaken firmness, incomparably more than we hope for any thing from any creature, whatever affection they may have for us.

3dly, Though all mankind should doubt, yet with God's grace we would live and die in that persuasion and hope.

Then we must descend to some particulars, as that God will have care of our Life and Death, and will assist us in our
 • Temptations, Afflictions, and Maladies ; and that he will dispose of us, and of all that relates to us, as he sees best for his glory and our good.

Proper

Proper Aspirations for this Intent.

Tu es, Domine, spes mea. You are, O Lord, my only Hope.

In Verbum tuum supersperavi. In your word I have hoped above all.

Etiam si occiderit me, in ipso sperabo, & ipse erit Salvator meus. Although you should afflict me with all evils, and should kill me, yet I will not cease to hope in you, my God and Saviour.

Non timebo mala quoniam tu mecum es. I will fear no evil, because you, Lord, are with me.

Dominus regit me & nihil mihi deerit; our Lord governs me and has care of me, and nothing shall be wanting to me.

And with St. Francis, when he floated upon a plank in the sea,

What have I to fear, God sees me, and can help me? I will whatever he pleases.

The better to keep ourselves united to God present, by means of hope, we may use some of these aspirations, or the like, every half hour, or at least every hour; and at the beginning of each action, being sensible that we stand in need of God's Assistance and Help. Let us beg it with

confidence by those words, *Deus in adiutorium*, &c. on both which we must make our particular examen as above.

We must also make that virtue our chief aim in our Meditations, and the fruit we draw from them, during the time we take it for practice ; begging it of Almighty God, in all our Prayers and Communions, as being sensible that all our labours and endeavours will avail us nothing, unless God is pleased to bestow it on us.

Lastly, We must, once a week, as long as we aim at the practice of this virtue, take a quarter of an hour to read over and reflect upon what is here set down for that effect.

S E C. VI.

How to keep ourselves united to Almighty God, by the Means of Charity.

It is the virtue which makes us love God and ourselves, and all things else for him, without mixture of our own interest, or that of any creature, by which our Charity is pure, naked, and blind, shutting our eyes to all things but God.

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We have certainly an infinity of motives to love God; but laying them aside, the tender name of Father ought to suffice, it being a name of pure love, which expresses the love he bears us, and also marks the love we owe and ought to pay him.

The Properties and Excellence of Charity.

Charity is the virtue which gives worth to all we do. It is not counsel, but a command made by God. It is the first, the greatest, and the most sweet of all his commands, as well as the most necessary. If we love him not, having so many obligations to do it, we are the basest of his creatures, and unworthy of such a command.

Charity, without dispute, is the greatest of all virtues. It is the very soul and life of them, and renders them worthy of eternal beatitude. It is the accomplishment of God's law. It procures most honour to his Divine Majesty, and most merit to ourselves. It gives force to do and suffer great things for his service.

The Practice of Charity.

1st, To love God, ourselves, and all things else for him, with a pure, naked, and blind Charity.

2dly, To resolve to live and die in his love, though thereby we should incur all evils.

3dly, To perform all we do for the love of God, which is to walk with large steps to Perfection and true Sanctity.

4thly, To obey the Divine Majesty in all things, especially in loving our neighbour, because he will have it so; and doing them all the good we can, because he will take to himself whatever we do to them.

Aspirations proper for this Intent.

O God, of love, reign in my heart, and possess it alone.

My God I love you above all things; but if I love you not enough, grant I may love you more.

Give me that love you command, and then command what you please.

Come,

Come, Lord, and reign in the midst of your enemies, and destroy all that opposes your love in me.

Great God, you fill Heaven and earth; let not my heart be void and empty of your love.

Dear Lord, grant me a holy hatred of myself, and a perfect love of you.

You are my God, and that' contents me. My God and my all.

These aspirations will serve both to enkindle the love of God in our hearts, and to maintain and keep it alive. We must, therefore, frequently use them, as every half hour, or at least every hour; and at the beginning of each action, considering God's benefits to us in that action, (the more to inflame our hearts with love) thanking him for the same with these words, *Deo gratias*, performing it for love of him, saying, *propter te*.

Upon both these specified times for aspirations, we must make our particular examen, and not forget a weekly reflection, as mentioned after the other two virtues, Faith and Hope.

SEC.

S E C. VII.

Of Conformity to God's Will, and the Manner of keeping ourselves united to God present, by Means of the same.

The Will of God must, of necessity, tend to his Glory, and our Salvation and Sanctification. We must then conclude that the most natural and efficacious means to glorify God and to sanctify ourselves, is to accomplish his Will. We have nothing properly our own but our will. When we strip ourselves of it, we then possess nothing, by which we are put in a capacity of being filled with God.

The Will of God is signified to us by the orders of his Providence. For it is an Article of Faith that God knows all and disposes of all; and that nothing happens but by the orders of his Providence, and by the disposition of his Will. We must then submit ourselves to them, both as to what concerns ourselves and others, and to all the accidents of this life. And believe it the duty of our will in point of obedience to God's Will, as
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it is of our understanding in Point of Faith, to renounce all human reason.

The Properties and Excellence of Conformity to God's Will.

Conformity to the Divine Will is the noblest of all other employments, having for object the highest End, which is the Will of God. It is the shortest way to perfection, and the most efficacious means to solid peace of mind.

It is what in some manner we are obliged to, since it is impossible that God should not desire, and even exact that his Will and good Pleasure should be the universal rule of all the actions of his creatures. It is the most profitable manner of the Presence of God; by it we walk with God, and are conducted by him as sheep by their Pastor, even to the mount of Perfection.

By it we become Victims of God. The perpetual resignation of ourselves into the hands of God, in all events submitting to his will, and accepting all the effects of his providence, is one of the most essential and most advantageous practices of a spiritual life, producing in them

them that use it, peace, purity of heart, and Divine love, more than all other practices.

By it we exercise not an ordinary charity towards God, but an effective love. We may lawfully rest content with this practice, which will supply the place of Man's Devotions.

Vita in Voluntate ejus. Life and all sorts of good are found in the accomplishment of God's Will.

The Practice.

First, To beg Almighty God to establish in our souls a perfect submission to all his wills.

2dly, To make acts of conformity to his blessed will, in all that relates to us, both in body and soul, goods, honours, pleasures, time, and eternity; and also in all that God permits to happen amongst creatures in heaven, earth, and hell; in nature, grace, and glory; desiring that all should be as God would have it.

3dly, When we find pain and difficulty to obey God, and feel motions of revolt against his designs and dispositions over us, to say with David, *My soul, will*
you

you not submit to God? Will you be rebellious to him from whom you have received all you have, and are?

Obmetui & non aperui es meum quoniam tu fecisti. I held my peace that I might not say a word against what happened, because it was you that permitted it.

Aspirations proper to keep us united to God's Will.

Lord, I accept with submission of all you ordain, both in regard of myself and others.

You are my Lord and Master, do what you please with me.

Ordain whatever you please, but give me grace to do whatever you ordain.

Make me according to your desire, always fulfilling your will.

Make me obey you perfectly.

Teach me to do your Will, because you are my God.

Come and reign in the midst of your enemies, and destroy all that opposes your Will.

Force my rebellious will to do yours for ever.

These,

These, or the like aspirations, if made every half hour, or at least every hour, will keep us united to God by conformity of our will to his. At the beginning of each Action, adoring God present and his Will, which calls us to that Action; let us say, my God, I do this to obey your Will; and I unite it to that obedience which my dear Saviour rendered to your Will; upon both these we must make our particular examen.

We must also make this virtue our chief aim in our Meditations, and the fruit we draw from them during the time we take it for practice: And beg it of Almighty God, in all our Prayers and Communions, being sensible that all our endeavours will avail us nothing in order to the attaining it, unless God gives it.

Every week we should observe these following things: 1st, For one quarter of an hour to read over and consider how we comport ourselves in the aforesaid practices of the presence of God; whether as set down for that effect; for constancy makes perfectness.

2dly, If those virtues produce the sentiments and effects proper, according to what

what is set down; for by the fruit we we must judge of the tree.

We should also, from time to time, examine whether we make use of the methods for hearing Holy Mass; if we read the motives before them, in order to raise in ourselves a high esteem and greater attention, by which we shall reap a far greater benefit from it. Then as to the Divine Office, mental Prayer, visits to the Blessed Sacrament, and beads; let us reflect how we perform them, whether according to the methods here proposed, or any other.

We should do well to write down the faults we find we have been guilty of, which will be a good means towards amendment.

An Oblation, or Profession of an entire Submission to God's Will, to be made from Time to Time.

My Lord and my God, I acknowledge submission I owe to your Divine Will, which I cannot violate without offence. And that it is your will which governs and disposes of all things, either by an absolute ordinance, or a permissive

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one,

one, that a leaf cannot stir, nor a bird fly, nor a hair fall from our heads, without your permission. I acknowledge also that you created me purely to do your will. O pardon my having gone contrary to it, and give me grace to amend for the future, and to submit entirely to your will, in the manner that is most pleasing to your Divine Majesty.

I beseech you, dear Lord, through the merits of that perfect submission which my Saviour paid to all your wills, grant me the grace to have no will but yours, to which I abandon myself for life and death, time and eternity, and that I may rather chuse to die than deliberately desire any thing contrary to it. Grant I may, by conformity to your will, stifle in myself all contrary motions, that so your Divine Will may be victorious over mine.

It belongs to you, my God, to govern the world, and to bring each one to their end by the means you judge fit. We can chuse nothing better than what your wisdom ordains. It is our duty to let ourselves be conducted by you without diving into your councils, but humbly in all things submitting to your will,
which

which I beg I may ever perform to your glory. *Amen.*

CHAPTER V.

SEC. I.

Motives of loving and honouring our Blessed Lady, and to raise a high Esteem for the Devotion of the Beads, which, of all others, is most acceptable to her.

FIRST, Our Lady is the Mother of God, and that alone ought to be a sufficient motive to render her all honour that may be given to a creature. She has none above her but God himself, and all that is not God is below her.

2dly, She is our Mother, given us by her Blessed Son, who gave us all to her on the cross, in the person of Saint John, and gave her to us all; so that we are equally with him her children, and she our Mother, and his will is that we both love and honour her, and make recourse to her as to a Mother.

3dly, Her love and charity for us, and desire of our good, infinitely surpasses that of all the Saints, as does her power

to help us, being Mother to the Almighty.

4thly, No day of our lives should pass in which we do not render her the honour and duty we owe her, as to our most dear Mother, and Mother of our Redeemer. God comes to us by her, and by her intercession we may go to him. The most powerful helps of human misery are to be had by having recourse and devotion to our Lady.

Of all the Prayers in her honour we ought most to esteem the *Ave Maria*, which the oftner we say with devotion, the better. No Prayer ought to take place of it in our esteem, but the *Pater noster*, which is taught us by Christ himself, and therefore called his Prayer. It contains whatever he would have us ask, both for his glory and our good, and that in a few pathetic words. Which being, we cannot do better than to keep our mind and hearts occupied with the sense of the words, as we pronounce them, except prevented by some affection, as likely we may be, even with the first two words, *Pater noster*; when we reflect who it is we call Father, and that he assures us his love for us surpasses that of a Mother

ther to her Child, which, though she should forget, yet he would not forget us.

If this comfortable truth should take up our mind, we may rest there and go no further; for as long as we find ourselves so taken up, Saint Theresia says, it-were to lose a great favour by our fault to do otherways, and that we do much more by saying some words after this manner, than by repeating the whole *Pater noster* several times without attention, or scarce knowing what we say.

The same Saint says, that some, to dispatch the task of Prayers they have set themselves, chuse rather to hurry them over, than to follow God's attract. In the Name of God, says the Saint, do not so, for you put an obstacle to the grace his Divine Majesty offers you, which is of great importance.

Let us say what we please of our beads, yet we must be convinced that all depends on being attentive to the words we speak, and united to the two objects of our Devotion, which are God and his Blessed Mother; otherways we shew that we have but little respect, when we chuse rather to be faithful to the number of our

Prayers

Prayers, (because we have a scruple to omit them) than to the well performance of them. For we do worse to say them so, than not to say them at all, except they were Prayers of Obligation, as the Divine Office, &c. And but hurrying over our others is not only a mispending our time, but also a singular disrespect to Almighty God.

After the *Pater noster*, no prayer ought to take place of the *Ave Maria*, which was composed, as you know, by the Angel, who had his orders from God, by Saint Elizabeth, inspired by the Holy Ghost, and by our Holy Mother the Church, moved by the same Spirit, to petition that powerful Lady in favour of her children; and therefore all that are so, ought to say it with great Devotion and attention.

In order to the better performance of this, we may make use of some one of these following methods, as shall be suitable with our present disposition. If we find difficulty in so many reflections for one *Ave Maria*, we may use but one at a time, and continue therein, not only during the whole *Ave Maria*, but the ten, and longer if we find our minds taken

ken up with it; and it will be more profitable than to change.

S E C. II.

A Method on the Words of the Angelical Salutation.

1. *Hail Mary*, Lady of this World, Queen of Heaven, whom all nations honour and worship.

2. *Hail Sea of Grief* in the Passion of your Son; for your grief was equal to your love, sufficient to have deprived you of life.

3. *Hail Mother of my Saviour*, in whom are all my Hopes.

1. *Full of Grace*, even from your Conception, then sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and built into a Temple fit to lodge the King of Angels.

2. *Full of Sanctifying Grace*, which in a far less measure makes other Saints.

3. *Full of Grace*, and to that fullness was added the fountain of all Grace, Christ our Saviour.

1. *Our Lord is with you*, not only as with his Saints and Servants, but in a more

more excellent and high degree, being with you as your Son.

2. *Our Lord is with you*, in your understanding to enlighten it, and in your Will to inflame it above all others.

3. *Our Lord is with you* now in Heaven, and you with him in such a plenitude of Glory, that no creature else does, or ever shall enjoy the like.

1. *Blessed amongst Women*, interiorly in yourself, as being a Celestial Cabinet, in which is contained all the Blessings that you may obtain for us.

2. *Blessed amongst all on Earth*, as infinitely surpassing them all in greatness.

3. *Blessed amongst all* in Heaven, because seated above all, and nearer to God.

1. *Blessed is the Fruit of your Womb*, in himself essentially blessed from all eternity.

2. *Blessed is the Fruit of your Womb*, and so overflowing with the fullness of Blessings, that he made you blessed bearing him.

3. *Blessed is the Fruit of your Womb*, he being the Redeemer of sinners on the cross, and the Food of the Elect in the Blessed Sacrament.

2. *Jesus.*

2. *Jesus*. A Name of joy to Saints and Angels ; a name of comfort and reverence to men ; and a name of terror to the devils.

2. *Jesus*. A Name which illuminates when preached, feeds when thought on, and succours when invoked.

3. *Jesus*. A Name which confirms our joys, gives comfort in our grief, and hope in our despair.

1. *Holy Mary*. Who have the largest share of Holiness and Sanctity, as being not only free from sin, but also from all frailty in thought, word, or deed. All in you was virtuous, perfect, and holy.

2. *Holy Mary*. Holy above all the Saints the Church has produced, as reverencing the Divine Majesty with a more filial fear, loving him with a more inflamed charity, and soliciting his mercies for us with a more unwearied piety.

3. *Holy Mary*. As being the living Altar, consecrated to God, as being daughter to the eternal Father by adoption, Mother of the Son, Spouse of the Holy Ghost, and Sacred Temple of the Blessed Trinity.

1. *Mother of God*, and consequently the greatest of all creatures, and most Holy of

of all Mothers, because you conceived, by the Holy Ghost, the source of Holiness.

2. *Mother of God.* Who is all goodness, all wisdom, and all mercy.

3. *Mother of God.* And therefore the most glorious of Mothers, being Mother to him, who is Lord of Angels and King of glory.

1. *Pray for us Sinners,* to the Eternal Father, (whom we have much offended) that he will please to pardon our sins, and write us in the book of life.

2. *Pray for us Sinners,* to Jesus your Son, and our Saviour, that he will apply to us the merits of his life and death, and pardon us our offences.

3. *Pray for us sinners,* to God the Holy Ghost, that he will replenish our souls with his sanctifying grace.

1. *Now,* Whilst we are yet upon our way to Eternity, encountering difficulties and temptations, and fighting our enemies.

2. *Now,* Whilst we live, and consequently offend or merit; the past being out of our power, and the future not in it, therefore it is for the present we crave your help.

3. *Now,*

3. *Now*, This very inoment, in this action, we beg your Prayers and assistance, which we stand in great need of, since obliged to fight against ourselves.

1. *And at the hour of our death*, at that dreadful hour which opens the passage to Eternity. When whole armies of our sins will appear before us in their horrid shapes, and our good works in a far smaller number, as we have reason to fear, stand unregarded by.

2. *At the hour of our death*, when we shall find nothing to hold us up, from sinking into despair, but the mercies of God, and merits of our Saviour, to whom we beg your intercession.

3. *At the hour of our death*, when men will forsake us, and the Angels and Saints expect to see our passage and hear our doom. O Mother of mercy, at that hour open the bowels of your mercy to receive my last and deepest groans, that by your intercession making a happy end, I may praise and glorify the mercies of God, and thank your goodness for all Eternity.

SEC.

S E C. III.

A short Method on the Angelical Salutation.

1. At *Ave Maria*, to humble ourselves interiorly before her, whom God vouchsafed to honour above all others, by chusing her for his Mother, which renders her worthy of the greatest honour that men or Angels can render her.

2. *Gratia plena*, full of Grace, full even from her conception, fuller than all others. Happy plenitude, there being no vacancy for sin.

3. *Dominus Tecum, benedicta tu in Mulieribus*, &c. Our Lord is with her after a far different and more excellent manner, than with the rest of his servants, which causes admiration to the Angels; for he is with her not only as her God and Creator, but also as her Son and the fruit of her womb, which renders her the most blessed of all women.

4. *Sancta Maria*. Most Holy indeed, since in her dwelt the Holy of Holies.

5. *Ora pro nobis peccatoribus nunc*. Pray for all sinners, and particularly for me. Now at this very time, wherein I live,
and

and consequently wherein I may offend ; and all the remaining moments of my life, even till I arrive to eternity.

6. *Et in hora Mortis nostræ*, and at the hour of my death, which opens my passage to Eternity, I particularly beg your help and assistance then, and that you will shew yourself a Mother to me, so that if I am unprovided of human assistance, and suddenly called away, I may be helped by you, in whom next to the mercies of God, and merits of your Son, I put my total trust and Confidence. *Amen.*

At the end of every ten we must add the *Gloria Patri*, thanking the most blessed Trinity for all privileges and graces bestowed on our Lady ; and at the end of our beads say a *Salve Regina* for a happy Death, and to beg her powerful assistance at that hour, lest we should then be incapable of doing it.

S E C. IV.

Another Manner of reciting our Beads.

In saying the three first Aves, we must honour our Lady as adopted Daughter of
L God

God the Father, Mother of God the Son, and Spouse of God the Holy Ghost.

The first ten is to be employed in acts of Faith—The second in acts of Hope—The third in acts of Love—The fourth in acts of Thanksgiving—The fifth in Petitions—And the sixth in Recommendations of ourselves. These acts may be applied to our Lady after this manner.

1st. Ten, acts of Faith that she is the most excellent, most holy, most powerful, most merciful, most wise, most perfect of all Creatures; and the worthy Queen of Angels and men, heaven and earth.

2d. Ten, of Hope as Mother of God, and most rich, merciful, and powerful, we hope she will obtain us the grace to live and die well, and never offend God mortally, to overcome our passions and all temptations, to fulfil our duties, and to arrive to the perfection God requires of us; all which we hope for through her intercession.

3d. Ten, of *Love*, exprest by her rejoicing that she is the Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and earth, and the most accomplished and perfectest of all
God's

God's works, praising and thanking God for it.

4th. Ten, of Thanksgiving for all benefits received from her, by her intercession, general and particular; and for her consenting to our dear Saviour's Death for our Salvation.

5th. Ten, of Petition for what we stand in need of, both for the corporal and spiritual; and not only for ourselves, but also for those we are obliged to pray for by duty, promise, or gratitude.

6th. Ten, to recommend ourselves to her Protection; begging her to shew herself a Mother to us, especially in obtaining for us whatever may render us more grateful and pleasing to God, as an ardent love of him, and great zeal to procure his honour and glory.

S E C. V.

A Method for saying the Rosary.

Offer the first five Tens in honour of the joyful Mysteries for those that are in mortal sin, or in any necessity, either spiritual or corporal.

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In

In the first Ten address yourself to our Blessed Lady, as she is Daughter to the Eternal Father. Reflect on her singular Privileges. Congratulate with her for all the Prerogatives of joy and bliss she enjoys under that title. Give thanks for all favours received by her means.

At the end of each Ten add a *Gloria Patri* and the aspiration assigned.

Aspiration.

O Sacred Virgin, most dearly beloved Daughter of the Eternal Father, employ your credit and powerful intercession for all your Servants and Associates, who are unhappily fallen by sin from the right of Filiation, and are become children of Satan. Obtain them the grace of repentance, I beseech you. *Amen.*

Second Ten.

Consider our Blessed Lady as she is Mother of the Eternal Word. Make the same reflections as before.

Aspiration.

Aspiration.

Monstra te esse Matrem, shew yourself a Mother, especially to poor sinners. Obtain them mercy of your Blessed Son, and restoration of grace, by the merits of Christ's bleeding Wounds I beg it. *Amen.*

Third Ten.

Consider her as she is the Spouse of the Holy Ghost. Make the same reflections as before.

Aspiration.

Sacred Spouse of the Holy Ghost, obtain comfort for your desolate Servants and associates in their distresses, grace to rise from their tepid languors, and the love of God to inflame their hearts, O Mother of Divine love. *Amen.*

Fourth Ten.

Consider her as the Temple of the Blessed Trinity. Make the same reflections as before.

L 3

Aspiration

Aspiration.

O Sacred Temple of the living God! restore by your Intercession this title to your servants, who by sin have lost it. Obtain strength for them that are tempted to forfeit it; and never permit them to become slaves of the devil by transgressing the laws of God. *Amen.*

Fifth Ten.

Consider her as Queen of Angels and men. Reflections as before.

Aspirations.

O Sacred Queen, cast a favourable eye upon your poor subjects here on earth, especially those who have devoted themselves to your service in this Association of the Rosary; but above all have compassion on all such as are in mortal sin, or in any affliction, corporal or spiritual. *Amen.*

The

The Second Five Tens in honour of the sorrowful Mysteries, for all the Associates that are agonizing.

Consider five of the chief virtues most resplendent in our Lady's life, making Acts of Love, Complacence, and Admiration.

First Ten.

Reflect on her ardent Love, and raise in yourself the aforesaid Affections.

Aspiration.

O Mother of beautiful love, if ever you obtained any sparks of that Divine Fire for any of your suppliants, we now humbly beg that favour for all your Associates now agonizing, that they may happily die in love, to live eternally. *Amen.*

Second Ten.

Consider her profound humility as before.

Aspiration.

Aspiration.

O Sacred Virgin, Mother and Mistress of the Humble, succour now your children agonizing, and ending the course of this mortal Pilgrimage. Obtain them a profound Humility, that they may attain to Eternal Life. *Amen.*

Third Ten.

Consider her Virginal Purity of body and soul. Affections as before.

Aspiration.

O Virgin of Virgins, have compassion on the souls of your agonizing Servants, who are terrified with the apprehensions of past sins and offences, wherewith they have unhappily defiled the purity of their souls. Obtain them true Contrition and Eternal Life. *Amen.*

Fourth Ten.

Consider her firm Hope and Confidence in God. Affections as before.

Aspiration.

Aspiration.

O Mother of the Desolate, obtain a firm Hope and Confidence in the mercies of God for all the Agonizing of this Confraternity. Take from them all diffidence, and obtain their Eternal Salvation.
Amen.

Fifth Ten.

Consider her heroic patience. Affections as before.

Aspiration.

O Mother of the Miserable, beg comfort for your afflicted agonizing servants! obtain them true patience in their sufferings, and a happy passage to eternal joy.
Amen.

The Third Five Tens, in honour of the Glorious Mysteries, and for all the Associates detained in Purgatory.

Give thanks to our Blessed Lady for all Benefits received from her, by her intercession.

First

First Ten.

Look on her as your Mother, and give thanks for all her tender love, and Motherly care of you and the rest of the Associates.

Aspiration.

Dearest Mother, shew yourself the Mother of mercy to the souls of your Associates suffering in Purgatory. Look on them as your children. Let your mercies be to them a heavenly dew to mitigate their flames. *Amen.*

Second Ten.

Look on the Blessed Virgin as your Lady and Mistress. Give thanks for all favours received from her under that title. Look on yourself as her servant and hand-maid.

Aspiration.

O dearest Lady, employ your credit with your Son, for your suffering servants in Purgatory. Cover and hide their faults under the mantle of your charity. *Amen.*

Third

Third Ten.

Look on the Blessed Virgin as your Protectress, and give thanks for all favours of that nature.

Aspiration.

O Sacred Virgin, our refuge, cast a favourable eye on your afflicted clients in Purgatory. Appease the Divine Justice in their behalf. Present these our small devotions offered for them, and pray they may be effectual for their succour. *Amen.*

Fourth Ten.

Look on the Blessed Virgin as your Advocate; give thanks for all favours obtained in that kind.

Aspiration.

O Sacred Virgin, prove now a powerful Advocate for the poor souls of this Confraternity suffering in Purgatory. Obtain their speedy deliverance. *Amen.*

Fifth

Fifth Ten.

Look on the Blessed Virgin as a dear and confident friend. Give thanks for all favours in that kind.

Aspiration.

O Sacred Virgin, offer these Prayers to your Blessed Son, for your friends and servants suffering in Purgatory. Pray they may be effectual for some of their deliverance. *Amen.*

C H A P. VI.

S E C. I.

A Practice of Devotion to our Angel Guardian.

TAKE one day of each month to honour your good Angel. As for example: The second Sunday in the month confess and communicate in his honour; and after having employed one quarter after Communion in thanksgiving for the said favour, reflect upon the great goodness

goodness of that God you possess within you, who, knowing your weakness, and the danger you are exposed to both for soul and body, and the difficulty you have to defend yourself against your enemies, has appointed you one of his Angels, who are the Princes of his heavenly court, and has given him orders to assist and defend you, and never to leave you as long as your soul is in your body.

Return his Divine Majesty most humble thanks for so infinite a favour, and admire the value he puts on your soul, and the love he has for it, since he thus employs an Angel for your service. Then with great respect and humility address yourself to your Angel Guardian and Keeper, thank him for accepting the charge of you, and since, on his part, he promises you four things, and faithfully performs them : Do you the like, and be as faithful in your performance as he is.

First, he promises you to be ever present, and never to abandon you.

2dly, To cherish and love you as a child of God, bought with his Blood, and designed for the same glory he enjoys.

3dly, To guard both your body and your soul, and to procure what is best for both.

M

4thly,

4thly, To continue his care of you in all times and places, till your soul is separated from your body.

On your part, promise him also four things, and beg his assistance for the performance.

First, A great reverence and respect to him, and neither to think, say, or do any thing deliberately that may offend or displease him.

2dly, A great love and tender devotion to him, loving him as your Father and best of friends, and endeavouring to increase his glory and joy in heaven, by the Holiness of your life upon earth.

3dly, A great confidence in his care and protection over you, and to have recourse to him as a child to the arms of its Mother in all your pains and difficulties, invoking his help in all.

4thly, To persevere in these duties till your last breath.

This Contract being made between your good Angel and you, beg our dear Lord, whom you have received, to bestow his Benediction upon it. Then retire in company of your good Angel, and from time to time entertain yourself with him the rest of the day. Sometimes
thanking

thanking him for all the good turns he has done you from the day of your birth (which was the day he first began to take care of you) till this present moment, reflecting on the chief, and, next to God, attributing them to him.

Sometimes asking his pardon for having passed so many years of your life without thinking of him, or at least very little. And for having so often contristated him by your imperfections, and so seldom made your recourse to him in your necessities, or thanked him for his benefits.

At other times open your heart to him, declare to him your necessities, and beg him to solicit God in your behalf. Desire him to give you light in your doubts, help in your dangers, comfort in your afflictions, and Victory over your Enemies, with his particular assistance at the hour of your death.

Moreover, during the day, address yourself to him by short aspirations, and if time will permit you, perform some Devotion in his honour, as his Office, or Litanies, or some Colloquies, &c.

C H A P T E R VII.

OF CONFESSION.

S E C. I.

Of Spiritual Confession.

AS there are two sorts of Communion; the one Spiritual, the other Sacramental; so there are two sorts of Confession, the Spiritual and the Sacramental. The one is made to Almighty God in the ear of a Priest, and the other to God alone, accusing ourselves in his presence of all we think we have offended him in; and exciting ourselves to the same affections of sorrow, hatred, and purpose of amendment, as when we confess Sacramentally.

This sort of Confession is very profitable and useful, and is the best disposition for Sacramental Confession, and as spiritual Communion supplies for the Sacramental, so does spiritual Confession for Sacramental Confession.

By practising this, we shall acquire a greater purity of soul, and the oftener
we

we perform it, the more will our souls be washed and cleansed from our sins, and become more beautiful in the sight of God ; and if Death should surprise us, so that we could not confess Sacramentally, this might suffice to save us.

Whenever we make this Spiritual Confession, we must place ourselves in spirit at the feet of Christ Crucified, beholding the several Wounds our sins have caused him.

Then beg light to see and understand our sins ; after which we must accuse ourselves of them, and when we accuse ourselves of the greatest, we must do it with a particular sentiment of humility and penance.

Contrition is the principal part both of Spiritual and Sacramental Confession, and ought to be rather interior motions of the soul, than exterior words. It consists in being heartily sorry for having offended so good a God. To excite us to it, we may reflect on that which follows ; but are not obliged to make use of all, one may suffice, according as we find ourselves moved.

First, I who have offended God, am not only a Christian, but a Religious person,

son, prevented, and obliged by so many benefits, eating the bread of his house, and esteemed for his Child, Spouse, and Servant.

2dly, By sinning, I have preferred a bawble, a thing of no consequence, before Almighty God, and this whilst he has the goodness to sustain and support me, and whilst I actually enjoy his benefits.

3dly, The little respect for his presence, sinning before his Divine Majesty, and dishonouring our Saviour's Passion.

4thly, The number of times, which surpasses the hairs of my head.

Having excited in our souls a true sorrow, and resolution never more to offend deliberately, though there were contained in any sin all the honours, riches, and pleasures that have been, or ever will be in the world; or that we should know for certain, that after having offended, we should neither have remorse of conscience, nor be punished in this world nor the next, and should, by sinning, avoid pain or confusion; yet for the Love of God we would not offend him. Then, with Humility and Sorrow, let us beg Pardon of his Divine Majesty, saying,

Dear

Dear Lord, if ever you shewed yourself a God of mercy, now is the time to appear so ; for behold in your presence a monster of ingratitude, after all you have done to purchase my Salvation.

If heaven was amazed at the sight of a God crucified and dying, behold a new subject of amazement, and excess of goodness on the one side, and of ingratitude on the other. So much sufferings and Blood, such precious Blood shed for me, which by my offences I have trampled under foot, yet I hope for pardon ; for it was never heard since the world had a being, that a sinner with sorrow asked your pardon and was refused. Your word stands engaged for it, that at what hour soever a sinner shall be truly sorry, you will pardon him. Dear Lord, either blot this out of your Book, or pardon and forgive me now.

S E C. II.

Of Sacramental Confession.

As the benefit of the Sacraments is the greatest help we have in this life, so on the good and frequent use of them, depends

pende not only our pefection but Salvation alfo ; for thereby we receive increafe of grace and ftrength to amend our lives ; and the merits of Chrift are applied to us as often as we frequent them. But this in proportion to the difpofitions we bring.

By Confeflion we are delivered from the greateft of evils, which is fin. Frequent confeflion is a perpetual application of the benefit of our Redemption, which blots out our paff fins, and gives us ftrength to avoid them for the future.

Nothing conduces more to our Salvation and perfection, than often frequenting the Sacrament of Penance ; becaufe, by the reiterated application of the Blood of Chrift, our hearts are more difengaged and purified from fin ; for it not only blots out the paff, but gives us grace and ftrength to avoid committing new ones, and maintains in us the fpirit of Penance, which is fo pleafing to God, and fo neceffary for Salvation.

The requifite difpofitions to receive the benefit of the Sacraments, are Humility and Purity of intention, which muft be to pleafe God, and to unite ourfelves to him.

To

To make a good Confession, depends not so much on having a good Memory and a good Tongue, as on the having a good Heart, a good Will, a sincere detestation of our sins, and a firm resolution to correct them.

We ought ever to go to Confession as if it were to gain a jubilee, looking on it as the application of Christ's blood to our souls for the Remission of our sins and increase of grace. We should endeavour to go to it with the same dispositions as to communion.

Prayers before examen of Conscience.

I render you infinite thanks, dear Lord, for having instituted this Sacrament of Penance, by means of which I may obtain pardon of all my sins, and re-enter into favour and friendship with you ; nay, even become still more united to you. Dear Lord, give those dispositions to my soul, which may, by means of this Sacrament, effect this to your greater Glory.

Divine Spirit, by the Sacred Wounds of Jesus, I beg light to see and know my sins, and the grace to be truly sorry for them,

them, and to confess them with due dispositions.

Mother of mercy and refuge of sinners, obtain me the grace so to approach this Sacrament, that I may by it be cleansed and purified of all sins.

O Holy Angel my Guardian, you have been witness of all I have done amiss, remind me of my offences, help me to confess them as I ought, and beg pardon of Almighty God for me.

O my God, since on the Sanctity of my Confession depends my perfection and eternal Salvation, and that I cannot perform them as I ought, but by the assistance of your grace; give me that light necessary to know my sins, and that Humility with which I ought to confess them. Give me also your love, that I may have a perfect Contrition for them and your grace, that for the future I may avoid them.

Then we must quietly and peaceably examine our Conscience, following therein the directions of our Ghostly Father. Which being done, we must endeavour to make an act of Contrition, which is so easy with God's grace, that a moment may conceive it, and an instant produce it :

it; and so powerful, that it obtains pardon of all we have offended in. Almighty God assures us of this by the mouth of his Prophet, saying, *Sigh, and you shall be saved.* But then it must proceed from love, and not from servile fear, as a good child, who grieves more for having displeased his Father, than for being disinherited by him.

Contrition consists not in tears or any sensible motion, for it may be had with a heart as cold as marble, and as hard as brass. But it consists in all spiritual operation of the will by which we detest sin, because it displeases and offends God, whom we are bound to love above all things. It must be universal, extending to all, without reserve of affection to any thing that is opposite to his Divine Love and liking. It must precede, if not Confession, at least Absolution.

A Prayer to beg Contrition.

Dear Jesus, I desire with my whole heart to have all the contrition for my sins that you desire I should have; but you know I cannot have it, unless you in your mercy bestow it upon me. It is
what

what I most humbly beg by your Sacred Wounds and Precious Blood, *since you will not the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he be converted and live*; convert me then, and I shall be truly converted.

To move us to a true Contrition.

We may imagine ourselves at the feet of Christ Crucified, and that he says to us from the Cross, *What could I do more for you than I have done?* Let us look on the sad state he is reduced to for our sakes, and to satisfy for our sins, and to say to him,

Dear Lord, This is the work of your goodness and my malice, How can I behold it and not die with grief? How is it possible I can take content and pleasure, after having been the cause of all I see you suffer?

Dear Jesus, by the wounds I have caused you, and the Blood I have made you shed, and by your holy name which I have profaned, I beg you to have mercy on me, and to pardon me, for I heartily grieve for the very least of my offences, as having by them offended and dishonoured you. Yet I will hope in you,
for

for however enormous my sins are, they cannot equal your mercies and merits; which merits I offer to your justice in full satisfaction for them.

Eternal Father, I offer you the infinite merits of your dear Son, in satisfaction for my sins, and to beg you will shew the efficacy of your Son's merits by granting me what I ask, which is pardon of sins, I ask it in his name, and your honour is engaged to hear him and them, whom he commands to ask in his name, and to whom he communicates his merits and credit. I am one of them, honour him therefore by granting me my request, since it is in his name I ask it.

Receive for me the satisfaction which Jesus your Son paid you on my account, dying on a Cross; that is abundantly sufficient to satisfy not only for my sins, but for those of all mankind; for the Sacred merits of my Saviour, pardon me all my offences.

I purpose, with the assistance of your grace, (which I hope to receive by means of this Sacrament) to fly from all that displeases you, and not to offend you deliberately in any thing; especially with

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your

your grace I will avoid such and such a sin, between this and my next Confession.

Let us not fail in this to secure the validity of our Confessions ; which done, and being quite ready, let us say the following Prayer :

My God, I offer you the Confession I am going to make, for your greater glory, and to obey your will, and to render my soul more pleasing to you, by being washed in the Precious Blood of your Son, and to satisfy your Justice by humble Confession of my sins, and repair the dishonour they have done you, and to obtain your mercy and that Sanctifying Grace, which will preserve me from farther sins, and for all the intentions I ought to offer it for to gain whatever Pardon and Indulgence may be gained between this and next Confession, and that degree of your love and grace your mercy has designed me.

Since, dear Lord, you have shed your Blood for me, be pleased to apply the merits of it, by the absolution I am going to receive ; one drop is sufficient to blot out,

out, and I confide in your goodness and mercy it will.

Grant to my soul, in making this Confession, all the requisite dispositions of Humility and perfect Contrition, which I ought to have in order to please and glorify you, and sanctify myself. Cast an eye of pity on my sinful soul, and regard not so much the evils I have done as your own infinite mercies, and the merits of my Saviour. If I have committed what deserves Damnation, he has done more than sufficient to merit my Salvation. With this confidence I will go to the Tribunal of your Mercies, in which I beg you will confirm in heaven the absolution I shall receive from your Minister on earth; and let it extend to all the sins of my life, all which I am truly sorry for, and abhor and detest them for love of you. I offer you the sorrow which your Divine Heart suffered at the sight of my sins, for that which is wanting in me. I beg, through the merits of that Sacred Heart, that you will cleanse me from them, and grant me the grace to avoid them for the future.

My Lord, I acknowledge that since my last Confession I have done much evil,

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and

and scarce any good ; or if I have, it has been done with so much negligence, that it can be counted for nothing ; in fine, the whole time since has been days void of virtue and full of irregularity. I am, dear Lord, an ungrateful, unfaithful, and perfidious Wretch, which deserves that you should shut for ever, in my regard, that wholesome Fountain which you have established in your Church, to wash me from my sins ; this is what I might expect from your Justice ; but when I reflect on your mercy, which is never wearied in seeking after the lost sheep ; and when found, you treat it with an ineffable Sweetness ; far from giving way to despair, I hope, with a firm confidence, the pardon of my offences, with which confidence I will go to the Tribunal of your Mercy to receive it.

When we go to Confession we must consider Christ as Chief and Supreme Priest, and, with joined hands and profound humility, make our Confession and desire rather to appear bad than good in the mind of our Confessor, for thereby God will receive greater glory, and we greater graces.

We

We must receive absolution as if Christ visibly gave it, since it is really he that gives it by the Mouth of the Priest, applying to our souls the Blood he shed upon Mount Calvary. Let us endeavour, in time of it, to increase our sorrow for all our sins, that we may concur with the Priest to the remission of them, and the infusion of God's Grace into our souls; for proportionably as we increase in sorrow, we shall receive augmentation of Grace.

Returning from Confession say,

My soul does magnify you, O Lord, and my spirit rejoices in you, my God and Saviour, because you have regarded the humility and penance of me your unworthy Creature; therefore, with your grace, the remainder of my life shall be blessed. Or else say, *Laudate Dominum omnes gentes, &c.*

Go straight to the choir, and, if possible, without speaking to any; and in thanksgiving to God for so great a benefit say,

Be pleased, dear Lord, to ratify in heaven the Absolution which your Minister has performed in your Name on earth;

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receive

receive the Confession I come from making, and finish the work your mercy has begun, by delivering me from these weaknesses and miseries my sins have caused in me; and grant me the grace never more deliberately to offend you.

Let my soul bless you, my God, and let all in me praise your most Holy Name, for having admitted me to this Sacrament. Let all your Saints and Angels praise you for it. Receive also those Praises and Thanks which your only Son, my God and Saviour, renders you, and will for ever pay you for the benefits which, through his merits, you are pleased to do us unworthy members.

I offer my Saviour's merits in satisfaction for all my defects in this or any other of my Confessions, begging pardon for them through the same merits, and that the Absolution which I have received from your Minister on earth, may extend to all the sins of my life, which I am heartily sorry for.

Receive, O Eternal Father, the satisfaction which my Saviour made you expiring on the Cross, and let it not only satisfy for all my debts to your Divine Majesty, but also obtain me the graces
necessary

necessary to amend what displeases you in me; and to love and serve you the remainder of my life as I ought.

Then with great Devotion and gratitude perform your Penance, and unite it with the merits of Christ; after which, it is advisable to accept, by way of Penance, of all the Crosses, Chagrins, and Mortifications which may befall us between this and our next Confession, as being ordained by Almighty God, who is pleased to add that Penance to that which has been given us in the Sacrament, both that we may satisfy for our sins, and increase our merit. Let us beg him to grant us the grace to make the best use of them.

Here we should renew the purpose, we made before Confession, of not voluntarily offending his Divine Majesty, especially by such or such a sin; but as we can do nothing of ourselves, we must not rely upon our resolutions, however strong they are, but upon God's assistant grace only, which he will not deny us if we ask it of him, through the merits of Christ, as we ought.

O Eternal Father, for the love you bear your Son, and for the glory he rendered

dered you by his death, pardon me all my sins, and give me the grace to avoid them for the future.

My God and Saviour, let the remembrance of this incomparable favour never go out of my memory; let me think thereof day and night, and never without gratitude and love; and grant me the grace that the author of all good be ever present to my mind. It is he who, by a mercy that cannot be sufficiently admired, pardons me all my sins, when the pardon of one only is a favour that a thousand years services cannot worthily acknowledge: How then can I acknowledge a goodness that remits me innumerable ones?

The remainder of the day we must, with the Divine Assistance, be careful to comport ourselves so as to do nothing unworthy of the grace conferred on us in the Sacrament of Penance.

From which time we ought to begin to prepare ourselves for Communion, by a great desire to receive Christ, in whose Precious Blood our souls have been washed. We may say from time to time,

Sweet Jesus, since your love is not content with what you have already done for me,

me, by applying your Precious Blood to my soul, to wash it from its Offences; but you also invite me to receive yet a greater favour, to wit, your Divine Self. Dispose my heart, I beseech you, for it, for none but you can do it.

A Prayer to our Blessed Lady, to beg the due Dispositions for Communion.

O most Blessed Virgin, and most worthy Mother of God, whom you conceived in your chaste Womb, whose adorable Body and Blood he received from you. It concerns you that he be received with all the respect and honour he deserves, and that he be not unworthily treated by those on whom he bestows himself with so much love. It is therefore that I address myself to you, to beg you will obtain of him for me all the blessings I stand in need of, to receive him worthily. Beg him to take possession of my heart by love, before he enters my body by the Sacrament. Obtain of him for me, all the Dispositions and Virtues which may render me pleasing to him, especially those two, which rendered you deservedly his Mother, which is Purity

Purity and Humility, that he may find nothing in me that may favour of either impurity or pride, both which I detest from my heart, and am resolved, for the future, to endeavour to acquire the two contrary Virtues, thereby to please him and imitate you; begging for this, his grace, by your all-powerful intercession, which I now implore with my whole heart.

C H A P T E R VIII.

OF COMMUNION.

S E C. I.

*Three Days Preparation for Communion,
before all great Feasts.*

The Blessed Sacrament which we are to receive, is the pledge of eternal life, and our Viaticum to bring us to it. It must put us in mind of the end for which God created us, and placed us in this world; which was, to render us happy to Eternity, of the same happiness which his Divine Majesty and his Saints enjoy. To prepare ourselves for this Divine Sacrament,

crament, besides the ordinary preparation, which consists in a greater care to perform our Spiritual actions well, and to avoid all offence of God, a withdrawing from all unnecessary discourses ; more frequent aspirations to beg of his Divine Majesty whatever may dispose us for Confession and Communion ; and the practice of Mortification and Self-denial, especially as to what may be necessary for the performing all our duties well : Besides all this, I say, we should do well to observe that which follows :

For the first Day.

1. Address yourself to the Eternal Father, who, out of his pure goodness, has made choice of you, to make you happy for Eternity with his own happiness, and nourishes you with his own food, which is the knowledge, love, and enjoyment of himself.

2. Admire his goodness, thank him for it, and beg his Divine Majesty to grant you the grace worthily to prepare yourself for Communion, which is a foretaste of that happiness.

3. Address

3. Address yourself to our Blessed Lady, as to her that was first chosen for that happiness, begging her, in your behalf, to return the Eternal Father thanks for creating you for that end; and beseech her to obtain you the grace to communicate worthily, saying three *Ave Marias* for that effect.

If it be the feast of some Saint, congratulate with him for his Felicity, and beg him to pray for you, that you may worthily receive that God he beholds face to face.

Second Day.

1. Address yourself to God the Son, by whose merits you have been chosen for Eternal Bliss, and who, by his Cross and Blood, has marked the place for each of his Elect.

Consider how much he laboured and suffered to open the gates of heaven for you, and to merit you the grace to arrive to that bliss; among other means he has left himself in the most Blessed Sacrament, that by receiving him who is the Holy of Holies, you may become holy here and happy for Eternity.

2. Thank

2. Thank our Saviour for all he has done and suffered, to open heaven to you, and to make you a Saint. Beg him by the merit of his Communion on the eve of his Death, when he received himself in that Divine Sacrament, that you may worthily receive him, and so render the labours and pains he has taken for you, fruitful and efficacious.

3. Beg our Blessed Lady, who conceived him, and afterwards, by frequent Communions, received him, and thereby so great a degree of Sanctity, that she would please to obtain you the dispositions you ought to have to receive him worthily, for which effect say three *Ave Marias*.

4. If it be the feast of some Saint, congratulate with the Saint, for having made such good use of the Precious Blood and merits of Christ, as to possess the glory he merited for him. Beg the Blessed Saint to obtain you the grace so to communicate, that it may merit you the possession of the glory your Saviour has purchased for you.

The Third Day.

1. Address yourself to the Holy Ghost, by whose Grace and Aid you must acquire the Sanctity which Christ has purchased for you. Admire the diverse means he makes use of to draw your affections from the things of this World, and to bring you to true Sanctity.

2. Thank him for all the inspirations and lights he has given you, in order to your attaining true Sanctity, which is found in real Purity of Heart. Beg the Divine Spirit to purify and dispose yours to receive him.

3. Beg our Blessed Lady, as she is Spouse to the Holy Ghost, to obtain for you of that Divine Spirit, the like dispositions which she had in her soul whenever she communicated; for that effect say three *Ave Marias*.

4. If the Feast be of any Saint, congratulate with the Saint for having so well followed the motions of the Holy Ghost, as thereby to have gained so great Sanctity. Beg him to obtain you the grace, so to confess and communicate, that you may

may attain to that degree of Sanctity which God requires of you.

S E C. II.

Three Days Preparation for Communion,

Before the Feasts of our Blessed Lady.

Besides the ordinary Preparations, as page 154 and 155, we should do well to make the following reflections.

For the Morning of the First Day.

1. Reflect, and give thanks to God the Father for chusing the Blessed Virgin for his Daughter, and for all the favours and graces he did her on that account.

2. Thank his Divine Majesty for that, through his mercy, he has chosen you for his adopted child, and for giving you all helps to render you worthy of that honour. Offer him in return all the thanks that are rendered him in heaven and upon earth.

3. Beg him, by the merits of our Blessed Lady, to grant you the grace to make so good a Confession and Communion,

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that

that you may thereby obtain the eternal inheritance he has designed you as his child.

In the Afternoon.

1. Rejoice, and congratulate with our Blessed Lady, for being chosen, particularly before all others, to be Daughter to the Eternal Father. Reflect on the Privileges and Advantages she has by the same.

2. Beg our Lady to obtain for you the grace to confess and communicate, after such a manner, that you may by means of the same be for ever numbered amongst the children and Elect of God.

For the Morning of the second Day.

1. Reflect, and give thanks to God the Son for having chosen our Blessed Lady before all others, for his most Blessed Mother, and for giving her all that was suitable to so high a dignity.

2. Thank our Saviour for mercifully designing you a like favour by Holy Communion; since you are to receive into your Breast, the same Jesus she bore in her Womb.

3. Beg

3. Beg him, for the merits of his Blessed Mother, to grant you a share of those graces and favours he bestowed upon her, that you may worthily bear in your bosom him she carried in her Womb.

For the Afternoon.

1. Rejoice, and congratulate with our Blessed Lady, for the choice her Son made of her to be his Mother, and for giving her the grace to merit that title by her actions.

2. Beg her to obtain you the grace worthily to receive her Son; and that you may, by this Communion, supply for the defects you have committed in your others.

For the Morning of the third Day.

1. Reflect, and give thanks to God the Holy Ghost, for having chosen the Blessed Virgin, before all others, to be his Sacred Spouse, and for having adorned her soul as was requisite for such a dignity.

2. Thank the Divine Spirit for having espoused you to himself in Holy Baptism

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and Holy Religion, and for being pleased to visit and dwell in your soul, by Holy Communion, as in his Temple.

3. Beg him so to adorn your soul, as to render it a worthy and pleasing habitation to his Divine Majesty.

For the Afternoon.

1. Rejoice, and congratulate with our Blessed Lady for that infinite honour of being Spouse to God the Holy Ghost, and for the merits he gave her to render her worthy of it.

2. Beg her to obtain you requisite graces to perform well so important an action as is Communion.

S E C. III.

On Ordinary Communion Eves.

Besides the ordinary preparation, 154 and 155, we must entertain our thoughts as follows.

For

For the Morning.

1. Reflect on the great Desire our Lord had to institute and receive with his Apostles, this Holy Sacrament, *With a longing desire* (says he) *have I desired to eat this Pasche with you before I suffer.*

2. To excite a great desire to receive him who pleased so ardently to desire the giving himself to us. Let us reflect who it is that comes; the end for which he comes; and the advantages which we shall receive by his coming, if we on our side prepare ourselves well to receive him.

3. Beg our Blessed Lady, by the ardent desire she had to receive her Divine Son in this adorable Sacrament, to obtain you a great desire of that happiness.

After Dinner.

1. Reflect upon the Humility which our Lord practised before he instituted this Sacrament, washing the feet of his Apostles; and then remaining alone without splendor, or lustre in this adorable Mystery, to shew us how pleasing this virtue

virtue is to him, and how necessary to dispose us for Communion.

2. During the day make acts of it, acknowledging yourself not only nothing, but worse than nothing, by reason of your sins; and if any honour be rendered you, receive it not as due to you, but refer it all to God.

3. Beg our Lady, by her great humility, which drew the Almighty into her Womb, and rendered her so pleasing to him, to obtain you that virtue, and say the *Salve Regina* for that effect.

After Vespers.

1. Reflect that our Lord, by washing his Apostles' feet before he gave himself to them, would give us to understand the Purity with which we ought to approach to Holy Communion.

2. That you may obtain this Purity, you must, by frequent acts of Contrition, endeavour to expiate your past sins, and be careful not to commit new ones.

3. Beg our Blessed Lady, by the great Purity with which she received God into her Womb, and afterwards into her breast by Holy Communion, to obtain
you

you what is necessary and fitting to communicate worthily.

S E C. IV.

For Communion.

After having performed all that belongs to Confession, we should wholly entertain our thoughts with what may dispose us for Communion; and as Spiritual Communion is the best Disposition for the Sacramental, so we cannot do better than to communicate Spiritually from time to time. This is done by believing God present, and humbling ourselves to our own nothing, ardently desiring (if so happy as to be in the State of Grace) to receive him for the same end for which he would be received; which is, that he may live in us and we in him.

Jesus comes to each soul in Communion, to unite himself to her after a particular manner, according to the degree of perfection he calls her to, every one having a particular degree which distinguishes her from another, and the graces given in Communion are to advance her to that degree which God has designed her.

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To concur with God's designs, and prepare and dispose ourselves to receive those graces he intends us by Communion, let us from six o'clock over night (if not hindered by obedience or charity) withdraw ourselves from all other concerns, and entirely give our attention to what may dispose and prepare us for Communion; being careful to keep the silence ordained by our statutes for that effect.

In order to animate us the more to this practice, and to incline us to employ that hour in some pious duties; we may reflect that it was at the same hour, to wit, six o'clock, that Christ on the Eve of his Passion eat the Paschal Lamb with his Apostles, and instituted this Sacrament, which he did as his own words express it.

1. That he might remain with us for ever.

2. That it might be to us a perpetual memory of his Death and Passion, suffered for our sakes.

3. That as he lived for his Father, so we might live for him, by receiving him in the Blessed Sacrament.

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As these were our Lord's designs in instituting this Sacrament, so they must be ours in receiving him; and we must not only beg him to effect them in us, but must also on our side concur to the same.

We should do well to reflect and see over night, what intentions we design to communicate for, and to offer our Communion then, repeating the same again the next morning before we communicate, a proper time for which is the offertory of the Mass; and it may be done as follows.

General Intentions for Communion.

Since you are pleased, my God, to express so great a desire that I receive you, as to threaten me with punishment if I refuse to come, (though no punishment, dear Lord, could equal that of being deprived of this happiness!) 'tis to obey your Blessed Will that I approach, and I offer this Communion in obedience to your divine Will; for the increase of your glory; for all the designs you had in instituting this adorable Sacrament, and for those you have over my soul; to beg they

they may be perfectly accomplished, and that you may be in me what you should be, and may destroy in me what is mine, and opposite to you, taking an entire possession of my heart, that I may be united to you with a more perfect love.

'Tis to obtain the accomplishment of your promises, to wit, *That those who eat your Flesh, and drink your Blood, shall live for ever. And as you live for your Father, so those that receive you, shall live for you.*

'Tis likewise to obtain the pardon of my sins and offences; grace to overcome all my spiritual enemies, and to be faithful to your love in all temptations; also to beg an increase of charity and all other virtues, especially a perfect submission to your blessed will in all the accidents of this life.

Grant that the receiving your Sacred Body, which I do in memory of, and thanksgiving for your most bitter Death and Passion suffered for me, may be to me a pledge of Eternal Life. I offer it also for the exaltation of our Holy Mother the Church, for the extirpation of Heresies, and conversion of all Misbelievers; for Peace and Union among Christian Kings and Princes; and for all the

the intentions for which I ought to offer it : also to get whatever pardon or indulgence may be gained ; and moreover for all the intentions which may be for the increase of your Honour and Glory : and to beg you will please to augment your grace in the hearts of all your Elect, especially those I am obliged to pray for, as N. N. and each one of this Community, which I beseech you to bless, preserve, and keep united in the bond of perfect Charity.

Besides these general intentions, 'tis advisable to join some particular ones, according to the view or design proposed to ourselves in each Communion ; as to partake of the Mystery of the Feast we solemnize ; to correct some fault ; to acquire some particular virtue which we find the greatest want of ; to return thanks for some grace or favour which we have received ; to obtain the spirit of our particular examen, and the grace to be faithful in it ; to pray for any that have recommended themselves to our Prayers, &c.

We must endeavour at night immediately before we go to rest, and in the morning as soon as awake, to possess our
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minds with the happiness we hope for, which is to receive God, begging him to give us due dispositions to receive him worthily.

Aspirations at our First Awakening.

O my God, I offer my heart and soul, in which this day you design to lodge; take them, for they are yours, and prepare them as you would have them prepared.

The duties we are employed in from that time till Holy Mass, are the fittest to dispose us for Communion, they being the Divine Office and mental Prayer: let us endeavour to perform them in such a manner that we may be thereby duly disposed.

As Holy Communion is an action of the greatest importance, and that we cannot of ourselves have due dispositions unless God is pleased to give them to us; therefore to obtain them of him we cannot do better than to address ourselves to our Blessed Lady, she having the most interest in the worthy reception of her Son, and also the most power to obtain us all that is necessary for
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that effect; and as she is our Mother, she is truly desirous of our good; and what greater good can she procure us than to receive the Body and Blood of her Son in such a manner that we may partake of his spirit, and be united to him for time and for Eternity.

Another motive for making our addresses to her, is to render ourselves more pleasing to our dear Redeemer who chose to come to us by her means, so we cannot do better than by her means and under her Protection, to go to him; nor can we offer him any thing more acceptable, or of greater value (next to his own merits) than those of his Blessed Mother, to supply for what is wanting in us.

At the Beginning of the Mass.

Offer to Christ the enflamed Love, and Holy Dispositions with which his Blessed Mother presented both him and herself to his Eternal Father in the Temple; to supply for what is wanting in you, and beg our Lady to make you partaker of it by her intercession, that you may

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the more worthily receive her Divine Son.

At the Kyries. Offer to our Saviour his Blessed Mother's Hatred and entire separation from the least sin or offence, and for her merits, beg him to pardon all those you have committed.

At the Gospel. Offer him her Faith, which was the source of all her happiness, and made her prefer God's Will to all other advantages; so present her perfect Faith to obtain Pardon for your having so often done the contrary.

At the Offertory. Take up your thoughts, and unite yourself to that perfect Adoration which Christ renders to his Eternal Father; and congratulate with our Lady that her Son only can worthily honour God: beg her to obtain you the grace to adore him in spirit and truth, and to be ever grateful to him for his mercies to you, and to be willing to satisfy his Justice, by patiently suffering whatever he shall permit.

From Sanctus till the Elevation. To obey Christ's Orders in commemorating his Death and Passion, accompany our Lady in spirit, and remain with her at the foot of the Cross, where she stood
immoveable.

immoveable. There it was that her soul was pierced with the sword of grief at the sight of her suffering Son, yet ever perfectly submissive to the will of God. Who can express what she suffered when she heard her Divine Son complain of being abandoned by his Eternal Father! with respect she adored the Divine Conduct, at the same time so holy and afflicting! she could not sweeten the bitterness of her Son's Chalice, but she honoured the Sovereign Authority of his Father which made him suffer so.

Here we must humble ourselves and beg pardon, acknowledging we are the unhappy cause of the sufferings, both of the Son and of the Mother; begging our Lady to obtain that the merit of those sufferings may be now applied to our souls to make them fitter habitations for her Divine Son.

At the Pater Noster. We ought to say it with the Priest, and unite ourselves both to the sentiments of Christ when he taught it, and to our Lady's when she recited it.

At Agnus Dei. Reflect that this Divine Lamb without spot, which our Lady bore nine months in her womb, and

which was slain for our salvation, will enter our hearts to apply the Precious Blood he shed, thereby to purify them from the spots and stains of sin; let us beg our Lady to obtain us due dispositions to receive the full benefit of that Precious Blood.

The happy moment drawing near which will put us in possession of our God, we must with a new fervour dispose ourselves by the following Acts.

Of Faith.

I firmly believe that in this Sacrament is contained my God and Saviour, who gave his life for my Salvation, and through whose merits I only hope it. I believe 'tis the same Lord who while he remained on earth raised the dead and cured the sick, and never refused to succour those that addressed themselves to him, and that he is not less powerful and willing now, than he was then.

Of Hope.

Dear Lord, what may I not expect and hope from your love, who in your
Death

Death gave yourself for me, and in this Sacrament still give yourself to me? I hope for no less than the accomplishment of the promises you are pleased to make to them that shall receive you in this Sacrament; and that you will apply to my soul the merits of your Passion, and give me those graces which are the fruit of your Death; and that you will not permit that my receiving this Sacrament, which you instituted for my Salvation, and which I do to obey your will, should through any unworthiness of mine prove my condemnation.

Of Love.

Give yourself to me, my God, for I love you, but if not enough, make me love you more. I am going to cast myself into your arms, nay into your heart, let me never be separated from you; take possession of mine, which truly desires to receive you, that so I may be for ever united to you.

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Of Humility.

What am I, O my God, that you should come to me ! I acknowledge myself infinitely unworthy of this honour ; for though I had the burning flames of the Seraphims, and your Blessed Mother's fullness of grace, I should be still infinitely unworthy to receive you. What then must I be who am so far from this, that I have no good in me ! and therefore I own myself unworthy of the least of your favours, and much more of this ; but since it is your will that I receive you, purify my heart before you enter it ; say but the word, and my soul shall be saved.

Of Desire.

Come, sweet Jesus, for I truly desire to receive you. Give yourself to me, and that suffices me ; but in giving yourself to me, grant me the grace to give myself entirely to you : for Communion does not only give you to me, but also gives me to you, according to your own words, *he that eats my Flesh remains in me, and I in him ; and again, he that eats*
me,

me, the same shall live by me. Grant me
but that, and I desire no more.

Of Obedience.

Lord, since 'tis your will and pleasure that I should receive you, commanding me to come, if I would have my part with you, I approach, yet no ways presuming on myself, but relying on your goodness, which I know to be infinite, hoping you will receive in mercy her, who comes to you with confidence, and acknowledges no good in herself, but much the contrary. If your Divine Eye sees any sin in my soul which might render it criminal, I beg you will forgive it, for with my whole heart I detest it, and all that may offend or displease you in me.

Offering.

Dear Lord, in lieu of those dispositions which are wanting in me, I offer you all the Love, Humility, Purity, Devotion, and other Preparations with which you have been received by all pious souls, and even by your Blessed Mother,
wishing

wishing they were all mine for no other end than that I might receive you more worthily.

Petition.

O my G^od, grant me those dispositions which I ought to have, and which you only can give me, that I may not only receive your precious Body and Blood, but the effects and virtue of them ; so that in receiving you I may partake of your spirit, and be united to you for time and for eternity, which I ardently desire.

Dear Lord, receive yourself in the midst of my heart, and glorify yourself there, as it shall be most agreeable to you : and let your love and divine dispositions supply for all that is wanting in me. And as there is no place worthy of you but yourself, nor any love with which you can be worthily received, but that which you have for yourself, that you may be worthily received in me, I annihilate myself at your feet and all that is in me, and give myself to you, that coming to me by Communion, you may be received not in me, but in yourself, and with the
love

love you bear yourself; and (that way) as worthily as you deserve.

With this disposition, of being nothing in your own conceit, and desire nothing but the possession of God, approach to Holy Communion, for it is of all others the best.

Enter, dear Lord, into your own, which is my heart and soul: come and dwell for ever there. Let it never be said that you come into your own, and your own would not receive you. I desire nothing more than to possess you, and never be separated from you.

S E C. VI.

The Necessity and Advantages of employing well the Time after Communion.

It is not only the want of a due preparation before Communion which renders our Communion fruitless, but also the not employing well the time after; the not managing those precious and favourable moments as we ought, in which our Lord remains with us. In each of those moments he both can and would bestow great favours upon us, if we did but dispose ourselves to receive them, or
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at least did not put an obstacle to them, by any voluntary distraction or dissipation of mind; had it not been for this, the graces we should have received in Holy Communion would have worked wonders in us, for we might gain in one Communion sufficient to enrich us for ever.

How we ought to employ those precious Moments.

1. To adore, with profound respect, the most God's Divinity really presents in our breast.

2. To adore the Sacred Humanity, and those wounds he received in it for us, thanking him for them and for all he suffered, begging he will be pleased to apply the merits of them to our souls.

3. To offer him and his merits to his Eternal Father, for to acknowledge his infinite being, to thank him for all his benefits, to satisfy for our sins, and to obtain all we stand in need of for our Eternal Salvation.

4. To offer ourselves, and all we have, in thanksgiving; and not content with that, to offer the praises of Angels and men.

5. To

5. To recommend those we have any obligation to pray for, or those who have recommended themselves to our Prayers, as also to petition for the souls in Purgatory.

6. To beg pardon for all defects committed in this or any other Communion.

7. To offer as a grateful return, the amendment of some fault, or the practice of some virtue between this and the next Communion.

8. Lastly, To beg our Saviour to bestow his blessing on us, and on our endeavours.

A Manner of performing the same.

My Lord and my God, I adore you present in me with all the respect I am capable of. I acknowledge you as Author of my Being, and my final End. I render you thanks, with all the extent of my heart, for this inestimable favour; your power, though infinite, cannot bestow a greater.

I offer, in return, all the adorations and praises of the Blessed above; all those which the Sacred Humanity of Christ rendered you; and those of his most Blef-

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fed Mother, after he took Flesh in her Sacred Womb.

My sweet Saviour and dear Redeemer, I adore your Sacred Humanity, and your soul full of love for me, as also those Sacred Wounds which you received in your Body for my Salvation. I render you infinite thanks for them, and for all you suffered, and humbly beg you will now apply the merits of them to my soul.

My dear Saviour, you are in me living and operating towards your Eternal Father, rendering him those homages which are due to him, and this you desire to do in the hearts of all your Elect, even to the end of the World. O do it now in mine, and permit me to render them with you: I unite my heart with yours for that purpose, and with you, and by you I desire to adore, praise, and love him.

O Eternal Father, who, out of your infinite Mercy and Love, have given me your only Son, with all the treasures of his merits, to dispose and offer as my own for your glory, and my own particular profit, being pleased for that end to have me receive him into my breast, as mine and united with me.

In

In union then of that Charity, wherewith you give him to me, and that wherewith he offered himself for me upon the Cross, and now gives himself to me in this Adorable Sacrament: I offer him and his infinite merits for the everlasting Praise and Glory of your Name, and in acknowledgment of your Sovereignty and Divine Being. I offer him, and all the Praises and Thanks he rendered you while on earth, in acknowledgment of all the favours and benefits you have bestowed on his Sacred Humanity, on his most Blessed Mother, on the whole Church, and on my unworthy self.

I offer him, and all his Pains, Labours, and Sufferings, in satisfaction for all the sins that have ever been committed, my own in particular.

I offer him and his merits to supply for all that is wanting in me, and to obtain of your mercies all that is necessary to render me agreeable to your Divine Majesty, and to secure my Salvation. It is in his merits I put all my trust.

As this Offering is infinitely pleasing to your Sovereign Majesty, I extend my requests for the whole Church, begging you will replenish the soul of our Holy

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Father

Father the Pope, and all Prelates and Christian Princes, with all the Graces necessary to acquit themselves worthily of their charges. For sinners, I beg the sentiments of true Contrition, and the grace to change and amend their lives. For those in the state of Grace, that they may increase in all virtues. For Infidels and Misbelievers, that they may be converted to the true Faith.

I most humbly recommend to your mercies all those I am obliged to pray for, as, each one of this Family, and all my Friends and Relations, beseeching you, for the sake of your dear Son, whom I have now received, to give them your grace in such abundance that they may perfectly love and serve you. I beg the same for my Enemies, whom I pardon with all my heart, and beg yours for them.

Lastly, I beg you to solace and deliver the poor suffering souls in Purgatory, for the merits of our Saviour's precious Blood shed for them, especially N. N. Let your mercy which has pardoned them the impieties of their sins, put an end to their punishment, that they may be speedily

speedily translated to the state of glory for which you eternally designed them.

Then turning to our dear Saviour say,
 Dear Jesus, you give yourself to me with an infinite love, with the same I desire to return myself to you, which I do in all the manners I am able, by the promises of my Baptism, and by the vows of my profession, all which I here renew, and beg your grace to observe them constantly : I give myself to you to dispose of as you please, desiring, as far as in me lies, to give you a more special power over my Body, Soul, Heart, and Actions, leaving myself and all that belongs to me to your loving Providence, and to the disposition of your will, with the care and success of all my affairs, begging you will please to give me the grace in all I do, to have for end the advancement of your glory, and the accomplishment of your Blessed Will.

I confide, my sweet Saviour, in your goodness, that having given yourself to me, you will not deny me what I want for your glory and my good. I cannot, dear Lord, doubt of your Love, after all you have done for me ; but since my God you love me, how can you see my afflic-

tions and not comfort me? Can you see me have so little love for you, and not enflame my heart with more? though you should refuse me all things else, yet grant me that.

Your Heart, my dear Saviour, is full of Love for me; it is that which brings you to so vile a Creature as I am. O in-created Love! what is it you require of me! nothing but that I love you, and be wholly yours; which I can never be so long as I remain tied to the love of myself, to my own Judgment and conceits, to every little will of mine, and to my reputation; whereas you require self-hatred for your love, and that forgetting all things else I should seek nothing but you. O my God, it is your all-powerful hand that can effect this in me, let it be done to me according to your will, and the amorous designs of your heart. Take, dear Lord, possession of my heart, which has the Honour to possess you; and love, and glorify yourself in me in all the manners you would be loved and glorified, and suffer nothing in me to rebel against your Will.

Here lay upon all your miseries to him, and urge for a remedy, since it is his
will

will you should. Ask whatever grace or favour you have need of, with great confidence; and if you know not what to ask in particular, desire our Lord, who knows your necessities, and the designs for which he gives himself to you in this Sacrament, and the effects which, by means of it, he works in souls, that he will accordingly give you, and work in you what shall be most pleasing to him. Say to his Divine Majesty,

To whom can a child better address herself than to her Father; you are mine, dear Lord, I acknowledge no other: O shew yourself a Father, and permit me no longer to continue in my imperfections, especially those that oppose your designs. Give me a pure heart and perseverance in your service; grant that I may frequently lift up my thoughts to you, and ever walk in your presence by Faith, Hope, Charity, and Conformity to your Will. Take from me all those dispositions which are contrary to your Spirit, and give me the bowels of Charity, that I may always compassionate the Weak, Sick, and Afflicted, support the Imperfect, encourage and help the Perfect, and make myself all to gain them
all

all to you : Sanctify me, that I may contribute to the Sanctification of others.

Let your patience be ever present to me in all adversities ; your obedience in my submission to the orders of your Providence ; and your Charity in supporting my neighbours, and labouring for their Salvation. Give me great confidence in your paternal Providence, and the grace to remain firm in your love during my whole life.

After the happiness of possessing you, I have but one thing more to wish, which is, that I may see and for ever enjoy you, whom I have had the happiness to receive : and I have all reason to hope it, for you not only give me your word for it, but you also give me yourself as pledge of it ; saying, *He that eats this Bread of Life, shall live for ever.* I firmly hope it, and this though I should have committed all the sins of the world, yet I would not despair of mercy and pardon as soon as I asked it with an humble and contrite heart.

Then kiss the Sacred Wounds of Jesus, by them begging pardon for your sins ; and at his feet beg true humility and the knowledge of yourself ; at his right hand,
purity

purity of intention ; at his left, patience in sufferings ; at his side, the love of God and your neighbour ; all which beg thro' those affections he felt in his heart when he received the Wounds in his Body.

O sweet and unspotted soul of Jesus, since you are a voluntary prisoner, I cannot nor must not let you go till you bless me ; vouchsafe, dear Lord, your Benediction both on me and all my actions, that they may succeed to your greater glory : and as you used to do when on earth, leave in my soul the marks of your sweet presence, to supply for your absence.

I recommend to your mercy all those I am obliged to pray for, as, each one of this Community, my Friends, Relations, and Benefactors, especially all those who have helped me towards you ; give them your Divine Spirit, and all the graces necessary to be truly pleasing to you ; accomplish in them, and in me, all the merciful designs your providence has had over us from all Eternity.

Pardon, dear Lord, the unworthiness, indevotion, and all other defects with which I have now or ever received you, and permit them not to deprive me of the fruit

Fruit which otherways your Sacred Body would communicate to me.

O most Sacred Lady, Mother of my Saviour, I return you humble thanks for the happiness I have possessed, and I beseech you to thank your dear Son for me, and to supply for my defects, offer him all the services you rendered him when on earth : and for his sake, who gave me to you in the Person of Saint John, own me for your Child, and shew yourself a Mother to me, whom next to your Son I love, and place my trust in.

Then, in return of thanks for the honour received, offer whatever you think his Divine Majesty requires of you, or what may render you more pleasing to him ; as for example, a greater Fidelity in your particular Examen. If you are much given to seek your own ease, resolve to mortify yourself in that point. If you seek yourself even in spiritual things more than God's glory, beg his grace that for the future you may sacrifice all things to that end. If you judge others, or speak of their defects, resolve between this and your next Communion to fall no more into that fault. This will be the most acceptable return we can
make

make ~~our~~ dear Lord for his kind visit;
and by so doing we shall reap due profit
from the Sacraments.

S E C. VII.

Another Manner of Entertainment after Communion.

Which consists in a great calm and
recollection, where the soul, humbled in
the presence of God, in her tastes how
sweet he is.

O happy hour (may she say) which
blesses me with the presence of you my
God and Saviour! my heart is more con-
tent with possessing you than if it had
the whole World! I desire but one thing
more, which is, to be never separated
from you who are the soul of my soul,
and heart of my heart!

The principal occupation of those happy
moments in which Christ remains in us
(that is, as long as the Sacramental spe-
cies remain) is to abandon ourselves en-
tirely to his love, and sweetly to enjoy
his presence. If we speak, they should
be only words which love suggests, as
these, pausing upon each: *I have found*
whom

*whom my soul loves—nothing shall separate me from him—My God and my All—My beloved is mine, and I will be all his—*Each furnishes sufficient matter for thought and affection : and as long as we find that, we rest in it.

Then we may keep ourselves with great humility at our dear Saviour's feet, adoring him with astonishment that that infinite Majesty, before whom Seraphims tremble and all Nature is but a point; should come to visit us ! then passing to acts of thanksgiving ; and being sensible of our incapacity of performing it as we ought, we must invite all creatures to do it for us, and offer him all the love of the Blessed in Heaven, and of all his faithful Servants upon earth who receive him. Finally, we must offer him his own earth, with all the immensity it contains.

Then again rest sweetly at his feet, seeking after no more, because we possess our All in him, who is our God ; sensible that we love him not as he deserves, but well pleased that he is so amiable that none can duly love him. Say to him, dear Lord, I owe you more than I can repay you, but not more than

than I would render you, were it in my power ; though I am far from desiring to be quit of my obligations to you.

Then consider him as the life of your soul ; beg him to sanctify it, that it may be a more fit habitation for him ; also beseech him to quicken your spirit, and enflame your heart : then enter by consideration into his, and see how ardently that Divine Heart loved his Eternal Father from his incarnation till his expiring on the Cross. He sought nothing but to do his will, increase his glory, and pay him homage ; which he still desires to do in the hearts of his Elect to the end of the world ; beg him to do it in you, and sweetly unite yourself to all he shall do in you.

See then what that Sacred Heart of our dear Saviour may dislike in you, and purpose the amendment of it. Consider what his designs are over you, and what he requires of you ; reflect what most hinders you from doing it, and resolve to do better for the future, begging his grace for that effect, without which we can do nothing.

Having performed this, you may retire, but let it be in recollection, which

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we should endeavour to maintain during the whole day : This is necessary to draw profit from Holy Communion ; for if our Lord's Divine Spirit remains no longer with us than his Body, (which is but while the Sacramental Species remain) our souls will not draw due nourishment from so divine a food. Since our Divine Visitor opens his heart to us, and is willing to have us retire there, let us then take up our lodging and remain there ; so keeping ourselves from the reach of all that might disquiet us.

To maintain in us the spirit of gratitude for so special a favour, (nothing being so displeasing to God as ingratitude) we may, from time to time, make use of those following aspirations.

Let all in me praise you, Lord, for coming in person to visit me.

Put yourself as a seal upon my soul, that nothing may enter it which displeases you.

Sanctify the place of your footsteps, which this day has been my heart.

What shall I render you for all you have done for me ?

My soul, bless our Lord for all his mercies to you.

SEC.

S E C. VIII.

When Tempted.

To feed on God, and not to live according to the laws of his love, is horrible !

Shall I offend God, who this day has honoured me with his presence ?

When we practise some Act of Virtue,

We should offer it in return of thanks for the great favour we received in the morning.

As when we are called to the Divine Office, make of it a Sacrifice of thanksgiving.

When we sit at Table,

Let us think of the happiness we have had this day, to be invited to the Table of Angels, and to feed on God himself.

By this means we shall not only return thanks, but also dispose ourselves for the next Communion ; for a Religious Life is the best disposition for Communion, and

Communion is a new engagement to a Religious Life. By this means Jesus will live in us, and we shall live for him, which is one of the admirable Effects of this Sacrament, it making us live for him who died for us.

We should be miserable if we partook only of the Body of Christ, and not of his Spirit: If we receive the one, and reject the other, we frustrate God's designs. Now to partake of his Spirit, we must enter into his Sentiments, and love and practise what he loved and practised, avoiding and hating what he hates.

The chief fruit we are to draw from Holy Communion, is to become one with Jesus in Spirit; this being his petition to his Father: That as his Father and he were one, we should be one with him in spirit. This we can never arrive to by our own strength; Jesus, whom we receive, will give it us if we ask it, and on our parts concur with his Grace. One Communion is sufficient to make us Saints.

It may be a help to devotion and attention, to receive Christ after different notions; for Example, as our Father, our Pastor, our Physician, our Soul's Guest,

Guest, our Viaticum : Sometimes in one manner, and sometimes in another, as may suit best with our present disposition ; foreseeing over-night after what manner we design to receive him, that at our awaking in the morning we may enter into the disposition of it, which you will find at the end of the Book.

FOR HOLY COMMUNION.

A Second Manner of preparing for Communion.

Intentions for Communion.

My God, I offer my Communion in obedience to your Will, and for your greater Honour and Glory, and in thanksgiving to you, for having instituted this Divine Sacrament, and requiring that I, though so unworthy, should receive you, which I do to obey your Will, and for the accomplishment of all your merciful designs, in entering my heart by this Divine Sacrament, desiring to receive and possess you, but for the end for which you would be received.

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I offer it also in memory and thanksgiving for your bitter Death and Passion; and to beg that the fruit of it may be applied to my soul, and that I may be united to you in as perfect a manner as you require, and that you may live in me, and I of your Spirit, and that you would enlighten my understanding and moderate my Passions, and grant me the Victory over them and all that displeases you, and pardon me my sins, and give me the grace to be faithful to your Love in all temptations, and a perfect submission to your Will in all occasions.

I also offer it in honour of your Divine Providence, and in thanksgiving for its effects, and merciful designs in my regard, and to obtain the grace to abandon myself to its decrees, and to confide in it in all events.

For each Sunday of the Month as follows.

First Sunday. In honour of the Blessed Trinity and Thanksgiving for my Baptism, and to beg that I may perfectly fulfil the promises made for me thereat, and the gift of Faith, Hope, and Charity.

Second

Second Sunday. In honour of our Saviour's humanity, and all the mysteries of his life, especially his Nativity and Infancy, and to beg humility and simplicity of heart.

Third Sunday. In honour of the years of his private Life, labouring and working with his Mother and St. Joseph for our Example, and to beg his Blessing on all my works, and that he will unite them to his, give me a pure intention in seeking but to please him by doing his Will.

Fourth Sunday. In honour and thanksgiving for our Saviour's Death and Passion, and to beg Salvation of my soul and pardon of my sins, and the Spirit of Penance, and the Grace to draw that profit from the consideration of his Passion, as he would have me, and the grace of a happy death. I offer it in honour of your most Holy Mother, and in thanksgiving for the Election of her, and for having created her so perfect both for his Glory and Good of all mankind, and for giving her to me for Mother; begging you will, for her sake, give me all the qualities of a worthy child and servant of her's.

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I offer it also in thanksgiving, for giving one of your Heavenly Princes for my Guardian, and for all the Gifts of Grace and Glory you bestowed on him ; begging I may always comport myself towards him as you require I should.

I offer it in honour of all your Saints, and to thank you for the Gifts and Graces you bestowed on them in this life, and for the Glory you have rendered them in the other, especially those whose day it is, and to beg through their merits the grace to attain to the perfection you require of me.

I offer it in thanksgiving to you for my Vocation to Religion, and for all the helps you have therein provided me for my Salvation and Sanctification, and beg the grace to love you perfectly in this life, and eternally in the other, and a happy death.

Lastly, I offer it for the intentions you would have me offer it up for, and for all those I ought to offer it for, to gain whatever pardon may be gained, and to beg the solace and deliverance of the poor souls in Purgatory, especially those that will be most for your glory.

Prayers

Prayers before Communion to the Blessed Trinity.

Eternal Father, I humbly beseech you, for the love that moved you to give us your Son; that you will prepare my heart to receive him worthily: enkindle in my soul as fervent desires to receive him, as you excited in the hearts of the Ancient Fathers, and other Holy Souls, who sighed most ardently for his coming.

My most dear Redeemer, I beg you, for that infinite Charity that moved you to come to save us, that you will prepare for yourself in my soul such a dwelling as shall be most pleasing to you. I should not have hoped for such a favour as to receive you, if you yourself did not ordain me to approach, give me then in giving me yourself all the dispositions required to receive you worthily; which I cannot have, unless you bestow them as a firm Faith, an ardent Love, and a profound Humility; let, dear Lord, this Feast be to me a pledge of that you keep for me in a blissful eternity.

Divine Spirit, I beg you to purify my heart, and enflame it with the fire
of

of your Love, to receive my dear Saviour worthily, who was conceived by your ineffable operation in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, that the Divine heart of Jesus may take delight in my Soul.

To our Blessed Lady.

Sacred Lady, worthy Mother of my Saviour, I beg you to obtain for me all those holy dispositions of heart, which I ought to have to receive worthily the Body and Blood of my Saviour, which he took from your Immaculate Substance: I beg it by the ardent wishes with which you expected the Coming of our Redeemer and Redemption of all mankind.

I beg it by the preparation you always brought to Divine Grace.

I beg it by the Humility, with the which you received the Word Incarnate in your Womb.

I beg it by the Love, with the which you embraced our dear Saviour, when come forth of your Sacred Womb.

I beg it by the Sorrow, with the which you received him into your arms taken down from the Cross.

I beg it by the Hope, with the which you laid him in the Sepulchre.

I beg it by the Preparation you brought to receive the Holy Ghost.

I beg it by the Devotion, with the which you received your dear Son in the most Blessed Sacrament.

I beg it by the Joy, with the which you was received by him into Heaven.

By all which I beg you will obtain me the grace to receive him worthily, and offer in place of what is wanting in me those dispositions, with the which you carried him nine months in your Womb, and by your intercession obtain that they may be applied to me.

Act of Faith.

My God, I have so firm a belief of your infinite Power and Goodness, that I doubt not of your having effectually inclosed your Body, Soul, and Divinity in this adorable Sacrament; your all-powerful Word has destroyed a Creature, and produced a God; grant it may de-
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stroy in me all that is mine and evil, and in place thereof produce what is yours, that your Spirit may live in me, and govern all my thoughts, words, and actions, that I may say with your Apostle, I live, not I, but Christ lives in me.

Act of Hope.

My God, since you ordain me to come, I will go with confidence to receive the honour you do me, and I hope you will fulfil your promise, that those that eat this Bread shall live for ever, and that by means of this Divine Sacrament, you will grant me the grace of a pious Life and a happy Death, and accomplish my desire of loving you as I ought; and in giving me yourself, you will give me all the dispositions to receive you worthily.

Act of Charity.

My Lord God, worthy of the love of all hearts, grant me the grace to love you with all mine; come into my heart and inflame it, that it may burn for ever in your love; you are wonderful in all
your

your works, and much more in your love, to work such wonders for a creature so unworthy and undeserving as I am : come, dear Lord, and triumph over my heart ; and let yours, when I shall receive you, inflame mine with your love, and convert it so wholly to you, that it may love nothing but you, or for you.

Act of Contrition.

My God, I am sorry and beg pardon for all my sins and offences, especially for my little respect in your Divine Presence, and my want of attention in all my Prayers, and for the little profit I have drawn from this Divine Sacrament, and my sloth and negligence in preparing for it.

Act of Humility.

O bread of Angels, in giving yourself to me, you become the food of beasts, for I am no better ; for besides a sinner, I am a base self-lover. It is with confusion that I venture to receive the honour you not only invite me to, but
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command

command me to accept of ; let then my obedience to it supply for my defects, for I acknowledge I am void of all virtue and good works, nor have I any fit dispositions in my soul to receive you with, and therefore must offer to you, in lieu of those dispositions that are wanting in me, those of your own Divine Heart, when you received yourself, which I beg you will accept of, and likewise those of your most Blessed Mother, when she received you; and of all your Saints and faithful Servants ; and grant me those dispositions I ought to have, to render my soul grateful to you, which I cannot have unless you bestow them.

Act of Confidence.

My Lord, notwithstanding my Unworthiness, I will go with Confidence to receive you, because I am sick and infirm, and you assure me that the Physician is for them, and not for the well ; and moreover, you being the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the World, I will go in hopes that you will take away mine.

Act

Act of Petition.

Dear Lord, before you instituted this Divine Sacrament, you begged of your Eternal Father, that admirable Effect which you desired it should produce, which is, that we might be one with you, as you and he is one ineffable Goodness. Grant, dear Lord, it may be so, that I may be united to you in sentiments, in inclinations, and in practice, imprint in the bottom of my soul the sentiments I ought to have of your Death and Passion, of which this Sacrament is a memorial. Grant me the grace that, for your sake, I may love what afflicts Nature, and will make it die, that I may live to you and for you.

Since your word is so powerful as to change bread into your Body, and wine into your Blood, shall not your Divine Person have the power to change me from what I am, into what you would have me be, and make me attain the end for which you created me, which is too sublime for me to acquire, unless strengthened by this Divine Food ; it is therefore I go to receive it.

Act after Communion.

Most adorable Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, I firmly believe I possess your Divinity ; I adore you with all the extent of my heart, and most humbly thank you for visiting me, your poor unworthy creature ; act so powerfully in me, as to change me from what I am, into what you would have me be.

Eternal Father, what shall I render you for this immense Treasure you have given me, in giving me your only Son ? for in him I have all that can make me happy for time, and for all Eternity ; it is he only that can worthily perform that duty, I therefore offer him to you in thanksgiving for it.

Receive him from me, and for me ; for he is mine both by your gift and his, in acknowledgment of your supreme being and my dependence, and in thanksgiving for all your benefits bestowed on me, the poorest and meanest of your creatures, incapable of returning you due thanks for the least ; receive his bitter Passion in satisfaction for all my sins, and pardon me them ; however great my sins are, they cannot equal what he has suffered

ferred for them ; I beg his perfect obedience to your Will may satisfy for my neglecting or slothfully performing it.

I offer you all the merits of his Life, which are infinite, to obtain the grace to love you, as you require and command me ; and the grace to persevere therein, as long as life, and the grace of a happy Death, which I can only hope from your pure Mercy and your Son's Merits, in whose Name I beg it ; and he assures me, that whatever I ask in his Name, you will grant : I may not doubt of it since he has said it, nor will I : and since Faith can remove mountains, and confidence obtain what it hopes for, let this my Faith and Confidence in the Merits of your Son move your mercies to grant my petition, seeing also that the price I offer to obtain it, is infinite.

What thanks do I owe you, my Saviour, for giving me yourself and all your merits in this adorable Sacrament ? which you do with an infinite desire of my salvation : I have nothing that I can render you in return but myself, which I here give with my whole heart, renewing the promises made both at my Baptism and my Profession.

S 3

Grant,

Grant, dear Saviour, that your Sacred Body and Blood, which I have received, may so fortify me, that I may by means thereof overcome all your enemies, and those of my Salvation, and remain faithful to your love during my whole life. I beg also the grace of a perfect consecration of myself to you, and the force and strength I have need of to support and undertake those sufferings and mortifications, which you would have me endure for my sins: grant me the grace that will nourish and make my soul to grow in all the perfection you require of me; and that grace purely gratuit of a final perseverance, which will bring me to the possession of you for all Eternity.

This, dear Lord, is the favourable time, the time of Salvation, since I possess you in my soul; and as nothing is impossible to you, for in one moment you can make in me that necessary and most desirable change, by changing my heart, and giving me a new one and a right spirit, which I beseech you to do, that I may love and praise you as I ought, and seek you with fervour, and accomplish with perfection your Divine Will, and direct all I do for your Glory.

Give

Give me the knowledge of what you require of me, and the grace to do it, govern all the motions of my heart, that it may always tend to you ; grant that I may be meek and patient in adversities, and grateful to you in prosperity, and not dejected in affliction : never rejoice, but for what makes for your Glory ; nor grieve, but for what makes to the contrary ; desire but to please you, and fear nothing but to displease you : grant that I may love you above all things, give me the grace frequently to lift up my heart to you, who are my Sovereign Good ; and when so unhappy as to offend you, immediately to grieve for it, so as to obtain your pardon ; and since you require that I walk before you, and be perfect, give me a perfect obedience to all your ordinances, and a patience which never may complain or murmur, an humility rather interior than exterior, a confidence without presumption, a fear without despair : give to my soul a spiritual joy in all that relates to your service, a heart which entertains no unworthy affection, or evil intention ; grant to my understanding to know you, and to my will to

to love you, and fervour to serve you, and to desire nothing more than frequently to receive you in this Sacrament of love, and each time to come better prepared, and more worthy of that favour than other; grant that the remembrance of your sufferings may fasten me so to the cross with you, that being united to you here on earth, I may for ever enjoy you in Heaven.

My dear Saviour, since for my sake you have descended from Heaven into this adorable Sacrament to conduct me thither, permit me not to go astray from the perfection you require of me, but make me follow you, who are the way, the truth, and the life; I beg it by the love that obliged you to give your life for my Salvation, and that you will grant me the grace to know, love, and serve you, and to persevere in so doing till death.

I here render you the Right and Liberty you have given me over myself, and return for your goodness in visiting me your unworthy creature; dispose of me as you please, for I am yours, and desire to live but for you, and according to your will, and not mine; permit me not to follow the desires of my heart, when

when contrary to yours, but make me walk the way of the perfection you require of me.

Most adorable Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in view of my obligations to you, and in gratitude for them, I here in your Presence renew the Promises made for me at Baptism, and those I made at my profession, which I beg pardon for unfaithfully observing, and the grace that I may faithfully observe them for the future.

Pardon, dear Lord, my sins and offences, and the faults I have committed, in unworthily receiving you, for want of a due preparation: I beg it in your name, and therefore hope you will grant it, for it would be a new offence for me to doubt of your mercy, which I beg I never may be guilty of.

I recommend to you all those that have desired my Prayers, or that I am on any account obliged to pray for, grant them all those graces that are necessary for them, and accomplish in them all your merciful providence has designed them.

Most Sacred Lady, worthy Mother of my dear Saviour, it is my duty to return
you

you thanks for giving me your Son in this adorable Sacrament, which I most humbly do, and beg you will thank him for me, and obtain me the grace always worthily to receive him. You are the Mother of my Salvation, and Treasurer of all the graces of your Son, and his Holy Mother; it is by your means that he grants them to some, and more abundantly to others: obtain for me all those you know I stand in need of: I consecrate my heart to you, it is to your Son's and your Glory, that I dedicate all I am capable of; obtain that my heart may be so fixed in your Son's and your love, that it may not be in the power even of Hell to withdraw me from your love and service, or make me do any thing unworthy of the honour I have now received. *Amen.*

The remaining time you may employ the three powers of your soul; your memory, in calling to mind all the benefits you have received of his merciful goodness, and thanking him for them; your understanding, in reflecting on the greatness of them, especially this you have now received; and your will in acts of love to him.

You

You may also expose to him the evils you groan under, and how they threaten death to your soul, and the corruption of your heart, your self-love, and want of courage; that seeing the grievances of your wounds, he may be moved to cure them.

Aspirations which may serve during the Day.

When, my God, shall I be all yours, by an entire fidelity to your will?

Take from me all that may be opposite to your Glory: Let the fire of your love consume all that is amiss in me.

How comes it, dear Lord, that having so often fed on you, I am yet so weak as to be overcome by the least difficulty?

A Preparation for Communion, by commemorating the Death and Burial of Christ.

None can doubt but that, of all other Preparations for Communion, that of the Death and Burial of our Lord is the best, as being the most suitable to our Lord's design, since he bids us do it in the memory of his Death: Both his Death and
his

his Burial is represented in Holy Mass; the latter by the Communion of the Priest and the Communicants.

The Altar is Calvary, where Christ offers the same Sacrifice as on the Cross, and our hearts are the Sepulchres which he has chosen to be laid in, and will sanctify, if we receive him with the dispositions we ought.

This Preparation contains two parts; the one is to purify our souls from sin, the other is to adorn it with Acts of virtue. As to the first, it may begin from the time we have been to confession: It consists in purifying our souls from sin, whereby we have rendered it an unfit sepulchre for our Lord to be laid in, and by a great care not to commit the least sin, nor to defile it any more.

From time to time we may say, dear Lord, your Sepulchre was neat and clean, but my heart is far otherways; for tho' it has been washed in Confession with your precious Blood, yet the root of ill habits remains still in me; for your own sake, I beg you will purify it from all that displeases you.

The second duty is to adorn our hearts with virtues, which is done by embracing
all

all occasions, which shall offer of practising them, and by performing all our spiritual duties with more fervour, and by frequent aspirations; begging our Lord to bestow whatever may render our hearts a more fit habitation for him to repose in.

Our Intentions for Communion. The same as before.

To the Blessed Trinity before Communion.

Eternal Father, I beg you, for the love which moved you to give your Son, that you will bestow on me all the graces I stand in need of worthily to receive him.

Divine Saviour, who, out of your infinite Charity, have not only given your Life for me, but yourself to me in this adorable Sacrament, give me all the dispositions I ought to have worthily to receive you. I offer you the dispositions with the which you received yourself, when you instituted this adorable Sacrament, and those with the which your Blessed Mother and your faithful Servants

T received

received you with : Accept of them in lieu of those that are wanting in me.

Divine Spirit, by whose operation my Lord was conceived in the Womb of his Blessed Mother, create in me those dispositions which will render my soul a fit habitation for him.

To our Blessed Lady.

Most Sacred Lady, Mother of my Saviour, and my dear Mother, take pity of my poverty and want of all good, and for the sake of your dear Son, send me of yours what is wanting in me to receive worthily your dear Son. It concerns you, that he be received as he ought to be : You know that I have nothing of my own, whereby I can do so. Shew yourself a Mother to me in this occasion, by supplying for what is wanting in me, it is what I most humbly beg of you.

Act of Faith.

I believe, my God, what Faith teaches me, that your infinite Goodness has made you descend from Heaven to come to me, under the accidents of Bread ; lest the
brightness

brightness of your Glory should hinder me from approaching you, come to take possession of my heart as of your Kingdom ; and to animate me with your spirit, that I may live of your life : It is for that I desire, above all things, to receive you, accomplish it in me, according to your designs.

After Contrition.

I am heartily sorry, and beg pardon for my sins, especially for my little respect, and for wandering in my thoughts when in your real presence, and for my continual infidelities to your graces ; for all which I beg pardon, by the merits of the Blood you shed for them.

Act of Love.

No thought, dear Lord, can be more sweet than to think of your Love expressed in all you have suffered for me, since it gives me grounds to hope that you will pardon my sins, having satisfied to the Justice of your Eternal Father for them ; you have had the goodness to make a transport of all your merits, which are infinite to him for me : The price

T 2

you

you have given is of more worth and value, than all the goods of grace and glory I can hope for, or he bestow. How great is my obligation to love you, which I desire to do with my whole heart, and to seek in all things to please you, and to refuse nothing, however painful and hard, that you require of me.

Act of Humility.

Though my unworthiness, my God, terrifies me, your Goodness re-assures when I hear you say, Come to me, all you that are burdened with the weight of your miseries, and I will ease you; which invitation makes me forget, dear Lord, what I am, and go with Confidence, and with an assurance of pleasing you by so doing, as also, because, bid by those that holds your place to approach, notwithstanding my unworthiness, I therefore do and hope by it to obtain that necessary grace to overcome what hinders my advancement in the way of perfection.

Dear Lord, say to my soul when you enter it, this day Salvation is made to it, by granting me grace to love you only, and to desire and seek your Glory in all I do,

do, and to dwell with you on Mount Calvary, by a constant remembrance of your sufferings and gratitude for the same; and when you have given yourself to me, take my soul with yourself in it.

Act after Communion.

I firmly believe I have received, and now possess the Body of my Lord, that was all covered with wounds for my salvation, and being dead for me, was laid in a sepulchre. I adore, my Lord, all those Sacred Wounds, and thank you for the profusion of the Blood you shed from them for me, giving me even to the last drop.

What can I think or say, dear Lord, at the most afflicting sight, since you received all those Wounds for me? and what renders it more afflicting is, that you received them in the house of my heart.

Give me, dear Lord, tears, both to bewail your sufferings and my sins, the unhappy cause of them; and since you suffered them all for me, apply the merits of them to my soul, that it may produce fruits worthy of them.

T 3

Grant

Grant that I may enjoy the effects of all you have merited me by your Passion; give me your Spirit, your Grace, and your Love, that I may love you alone, that have loved me to such a degree as to give your Blood and Life for me: fortify my weakness, and strengthen my will in good, that I may so operate with fidelity in the manner you require of me, as that I may be a victim of your Will.

Nothing has been capable, dear Lord, to hinder you from being all mine, neither Heaven, nor your Divinity, nor the gibbet of the Cross: grant me the grace, that nothing may hinder me from being all yours, to whom I owe myself both for Creation and Redemption.

It was never heard that in your mortal life you lodged with any, which you did not liberally reward with your gifts; I beg you will do the same to your present Habitation, which is my heart: let the touch of yours, which consecrates all things, sanctify my heart that it may be grateful to you.

Anima Christi Sanctifica me.

Corpus Christi salva me.

Sanguis

Sanguis Christi inebria me.
Aqua Lateris Christi lava me.
Passio Christi conforta me.
O Bone Jesu exaudi me.
Intra tua Vulnera absconde me.
Ne permittas me separari a te.
Ab Hoste maligno defende me.
In hora mortis meæ voca me.
Et jube me venire ad te.
Ut cum Sanctis tuis laudem te.
In secula seculorum. Amen.

I am poor, miserable, and weak, and of myself can do nothing; but with your grace, nothing is impossible to me: my life is all human, I know not if I even am, but this I know, that I am most miserable to live after such a manner: change, dear Lord, my life, and live in me, and let me live but for you, you can do it, that can do all things, and I hope and beg you will.

You see the danger I am in; hold me with your all-powerful hand that I fall not: direct me with your Spirit that I stray not; defend me, dear Lord, from myself, and permit me not to follow my irregular inclination and my own will, since it separates me from you;

you ; make me sensible what ought to be the life of one that feeds on you, and give me the grace that mine may be such.

I beg that your Divine Presence may so fortify me in your love, that I may overcome all the enemies of it, and make daily more and more progress in it, and that having given yourself to me, you will give me the grace to give myself entirely to you, and that nothing may ever separate me from you.

I consecrate to you my soul and body, that you may sanctify both my actions and sufferings, that you may render them meritorious ; my desires and good resolutions, that you may sustain them by your grace ; my designs and undertakings, that you may bless them ; my life and my death, that you may sanctify them ; and above all, I offer you my heart : that you may enflame it, and reign forever in it.

Take, dear Lord, my heart, and leave me your spirit, for how can I live when I see you dead, unless you leave me your spirit ? that it may live in me, and make me to live for you only, and deplore the remainder of my days, in the bitterness.

bitterness of my heart, your death and my sins, which have been the cause of it, for which I most humbly beg pardon.

I beg, dear Lord, that you will grant me the victory over my passion, especially that which most opposes my Sanctification, and makes me unfaithful to your Love; remove all obstacles to your designs, and permit me not to be so ungrateful, after what you have done for me, as to refuse to live for you, whatever it must cost me.

Your Apostle tells me, that I am not my own but yours, you having bought me at a great price, which is more certain than certainty itself, and more true than all truths. Nothing can please me more than this assurance, that I am all yours and not my own, my soul does infinitely rejoice thereat. I am yours by an infinity of titles, you having redeemed me and delivered me, and spared my life, when I was guilty of death, from which time you tell me that I ceased being my own and become yours; may I ever be so; it is in that consists my comfort and my happiness.

Though by necessity I am yours, I will be so by my free choice, and therefore I bequeath

bequeath my Soul to you, my most dear Redeemer—my body to your sweet Providence—my heart to your Love—my liberty to your Will—my whole being to your Glory—all my good and bad thoughts, words, and deeds to your Mercies—my Life and my Death to your Providence—all my affairs, both Spiritual and Temporal, to the Protection of your most dear Mother.

My Lord and my God, since you are pleased to be all mine, I beg you will give me the grace to be all yours : Whose should I be but yours, my Creator and Redeemer ? who has so many rights over me, and to whom I totally owe myself. I bid adieu, therefore, to all Creatures, to dedicate myself wholly to the good Will and Pleasure of you, my God and Creator.

Most Sacred Lady, Mother of my Saviour, and my most dear Mother, you was present at the Sepulchre of your Son, and with your Hand and Advice assisted them to bury him. I beg your assistance for that effect, that I may bury him in my heart, which by Holy Communion is become a mystical Sepulchre of his.

Help

Help me to render him all the duties I owe him, in imitation of your example; with what tender affection did you receive him into your Arms, when taken down from the Cross? With what grief did you behold all his Wounds? you washed them with your tears, which flowed in great abundance from your eyes; you kissed them with profound respect, and with the bosom of your Love you imbalanced them; obtain me the grace to do the same, and not only to weep for Compassion of his Sufferings, but also for my sins, the unhappy cause thereof: and as my poverty affords me not the sweet perfumes of virtues to imbalm him with, I beg you, as my most dear Mother, that you will offer him yours to supply for what is wanting in me.

When you saw him laid in the Sepulchre, how greatly did your grief increase, to see yourself deprived of his Sacred Body? you would willingly have remained by him at the Sepulchre; but because it was God's Will you should not, you separated yourself from him, teaching me, by your Example, to deprive myself of whatever is most dear to me, when God requires it.

My

My dear Saviour, I offer you the sweet perfumes of all virtues, with the which your Blessed Mother imbalmed you, and I wish it were in my power, tho' it cost me never so much, to anoint your Sacred Body with the same.

I beg, by the merits of your Sacred Mother, to grant me the grace to love you and her, so as that nothing may be able to withdraw me from it.

Mother of my Saviour, accept of me for your Child, and bury me in the Wounds of your dear Son, and obtain for me, that I may live in a faithful observance of all the duties of a Spouse of his.

Your rest, dear Lady, was in Labours; your delight was in the Cross, and your Life was in the Death of Jesus; obtain for me by the merits of your Son, that I may imitate you.

S E C. IX.

Reflections for our first awaking, when we design to receive our Lord as Father.

Considering him as your Father, and yourself as his most ungrateful child,
and

and desirous of returning to your duty, say, *I will arise and go to my Father*, do it with speed, and with a great confidence that he will receive and forgive you.

While you are dressing, keep your thoughts more or less upon the same subject.

Before Communion.

Reflect that *that* Lord, whom Heaven and earth reverences as their God, has adopted you for his child, and requires that you should esteem and love him as your Father. Hence take courage to go to him, for such is his love, that he is not content to call himself and to be our Father, but because a Mother's love is more tender, he compares himself to a Mother, saying, that though peradventure she may forget the infant she brought forth, yet will he not be unmindful of us, for he has us written in his hand; and then again, as a Mother makes much of the child she nourishes at her breast, so will he cherish and comfort us. What motives for confidence! let us then believe that since he is our

U

Father,

Father, he cannot but act like a Father, if we behave ourselves like good children, asking him pardon, and being truly sorry for having offended him, which if we do, he will entirely forgive us, and receive us to his embraces with tenderness, like to the Father of the prodigal Son. With this assurance let us rise and go to Communion, saying to ourselves, *I will arise and go to my Father.*

After Communion.

Consider that your most merciful Father has received you into favour, and in token of it has made this great banquet for you, a greater cannot be made ! for which return him the best thanks you are able, and with great humility say,

O my Lord and merciful Father, it had been sufficient, if you had only permitted me to have dwelt in some corner of your House among your meanest servants, which had been more than I deserved ; but you in place of that have acted like what you are, a God of infinite Mercy !

How great is your goodness to take upon you the Name and Office of a
Father,

Father, in regard of dust and ashes, which I am ! how can I possibly give a con-dign welcome to such a Father, or express the joys my Heart is full of, to receive you into it ! make me a Child worthy of so good a Father, and imprint the character of it in my Heart and actions. Pardon all I have offended you in, and give me the Spirit of Adoption which may make me love you, and have recourse to you as to my Father ; grant me also your fear, which may keep me from ever displeasing you in the least.

S E C. X.

*Reflections for our First Awakening, when
we consider him as our Pastor.*

Conceive a great joy that Christ your good Pastor will come this day to visit you in Holy Communion ; and be assured that he will fulfil all the duties of a good Pastor in your regard.

While you dress, entertain your thoughts upon that subject.

Before Communion.

Reflect that Christ your good Pastor is descended from Heaven, and in this Sacrament, to seek and save you, who have most ungratefully strayed from him; and that not once only, or a hundred times, but as often as you have sinned. Acknowledge that of yourself you are incapable either to find your Pastor, or the way to him, did not he in his mercy come to you, which in this Sacrament he is pleased to do, and will perform all the duties of the best of Pastors, as he declares by the Mouth of his Prophet, promising, *That he himself will seek and visit his sheep, &c. and in the most plentiful Pastures will he feed them, &c. that which was gone astray he will bring back, that which was broken he will bind up, that which was weak he will strengthen, and that which was fat and strong he will keep: ponder every particular, for each is full of pith; and encouraged by the same, go with confidence to receive your dear Pastor.*

After

After Communion.

Adore and thank your Divine Pastor for coming to seek you who so little deserve this his tender concern for you. Admire his Love! he stands in no need of you, yet seeks you as if his happiness depended upon you! Acknowledge his goodness in feeding you with his own most precious Body and Blood, which he does with so great a Love, that he even threatens Death to those that will not approach to receive him.

Say to him, your mercies, Lord, exceed all thought. I can never thank and praise you sufficiently for your great goodness, in making yourself my Food, and seeking me when gone astray, which I have so often done! and also for placing me in your richest pastures; nay, in your sheepfold Holy Religion, in which you place your Elect Flock, and from whence (if I hinder you not) you will carry me to your sheepfold of Eternal Bliss; for all which I owe you more gratitude than all Hearts are capable of.

Pardon my ungrateful withdrawing myself from your Conduct, and making use even of your Benefits to offend you.

U 3

Though

Though there is nothing in me, dear Lord, that can merit your mercy, yet knowing you are so bountifully good, and so inclined to forgive, I here with prostrate Heart implore your Pardon for all my past Ingratitudes, and beg moreover this unlimited favour, that you will imprint anew your mark upon me, to make appear that I am of those sheep which your mercies will place on your Right Hand at Judgment. Let your Cross distinguish me, not a necessary bearing it, (which all must do) but a voluntary embracing it for Love of you: Grant that I may constantly hear and obey your voice whenever it calls me.

S E C. XI.

Reflection for our First Awakening when we receive him as our Physician.

Reflect that Christ, your Divine Physician, will come this day to visit you, to whose power and skill no disease is incurable. Rise with great Confidence of obtaining your Soul's Health, since he requires no more to cure us, but an acknowledgment

knowledge of your infirmity, and a real desire to be cured.

Before Communion.

Consider that when Christ was in the World, none ever came to him to be cured who did not obtain it. No sooner had the Centurion told him of his sick Servant, but presently he answered that he would come and cure him. And to the Lepers, who only said, *Lord, if you will you can make us clean*; he answered, *I will that you be clean*; and to several others he offered Health, without being asked.

By all which move yourself to a great Confidence of obtaining the cure of your soul's diseases: It is chiefly for that end he desires to come to us, as his own Words express, saying, the healthy have no need of a Physician, but those that are infirm; signifying thereby that his chief office is to be a Physician of souls; and to the end we may be healed of all our infirmities, he has made a Medicine of his own Flesh and Blood, and has left it us in this Sacrament, that by receiving it we may be cured of all our diseases.

O

O what a Physician ! and what a remedy ! who can doubt of being cured, for he not only cures past sins, but preserves us from future ones : Let us then with confidence rise and go to receive him, since he declares that he comes for the sick and infirm, as such let us approach him that he may cure us.

After Communion.

Conformable to the foregoing consideration, entertain your Divine Physician. Confide that only the touch of his Sacred Body will effect the perfect cure of all your soul's disease. Return him infinite thanks for taking this office upon him, and for his charity in visiting so poor and loathsome a sick soul as yours is, and beg him to excuse the stench which your diseases send forth, and which would strike horror to a less goodness than his.

Lay open your maladies to him as well as you can ; and if your ignorance is so great that you know them not, or cannot declare them, beg him that knows them to cure them, and to cure the blindness of your understanding ; to mollify the hardness of your heart as to good ; to stop the
impetuous

impetuous course of your will to evil ; to purge you of those hateful dispositions of pride and envy ; and to root up self-love, the source of all evils.

S E C. XII.

Reflections for our First Awakening, when we consider him as our soul's Guest.

Reflect on those words our Lord spoke to Zaccheus, and suppose the same are said to you : *Come down in haste, for this day I will abide in your house.* Conceive a great desire of that happiness, and rise with speed.

Before Communion.

Consider that the same Lord whom you are to receive, complained to his Disciples that the foxes had holes and the birds their nests, but the Son of man had no where to repose his head, having been refused entertainment, when in the shape of man : he has cloathed himself with the form of bread, that so he may enter your heart, and make your soul his mansion.

Acknowledge

Acknowledge the poorness and vileness of the lodging of your heart to receive and lodge so great a God. Say to him, Tho' you are pleased to say, dear Lord, that your delights are to be with the children of men, yet how is it possible you can take delight in so poor a habitation as mine is? therefore, for your own sake, give me what may render my heart an agreeable dwelling to you, for unless you bestow it, I cannot have it.

The desire you express of being my guest, encourages me to receive you, tho' I am most unworthy: you expect not an invitation from me, but invite yourself, and ever press to come, assuring me that you are ever calling at the door of my heart, and that if I will open to you, you will come in and sup with me, and let me sup with you.

After Communion.

Welcome that Lord to this poor home of mine; welcome my soul's felicity, thrice happy hour which has blessed me with the presence of my God! a greater Happiness I cannot receive on earth, nor you give, because you give yourself. I
bless

bless your mercies, and again bid you as welcome as a heart, filled with love and gratitude, can do !

But when I reflect on myself, how can I welcome you ! my soul is defiled with sin, and my house is nothing but a den of beasts, and hideous monsters ! though for yourself you are highly welcome ; yet in regard to what I am, I must desire you, with St. Peter, to depart from me to those holy souls who are prepared to receive so great a guest. Leave this den of mine, for it is better I should perish in misery, than entertain your sanctity in so prophane a heart.

But if your goodness is such that, notwithstanding you are willing to stay, chase from me all you dislike in me, and all that is hurtful to me ; purify my heart, or create a new one in me. Dear Lord, you know my poverty, and therefore you cannot expect that I can offer you any thing but requests, your coming therefore cannot be to take, but to give me entertainment. Your entering my heart is not so much to be my guest as to make me yours. Say to my soul what you did to Zaccheus, *this day salvation is made on this house* : you can as easily

easily bestow salvation on me, as on him, and it is chiefly for that end you come; speak then that word of comfort to my soul, and it shall be for ever blessed, and pardon the bad entertainments I have given you, whenever I have had the honour to receive you: and also all the faults I have ever committed; and besides your pardon for the past, give me amendment for the future, and such holy thoughts and amorous desires, as are fitting to entertain so great a goodness, and so good a God.

S E C. XIII.

Reflections at our First Awakening, when we receive him as our VIATICUM.

Imagine this to be the day in which you are to take your great journey from time to eternity. Reflect, with gratitude and confidence, that Christ himself will be your Viaticum, say to your soul,
Arise, let us go and die with Jesus.

Before

Before Communion.

Consider that in this Sacrament is truly contained the Bread of Life, it being the Body of Christ, who is life itself, and gives life to the dead: he comes to you, to enable you to go to him; and to make your journey from earth to heaven, from time to a happy Eternity. O infinite Goodness! I can fear no evil if you are with me; I will approach you with confidence, confiding, that since you give yourself to me here, you will not refuse yourself to me in heaven: and I hope your coming is to lead me to that happiness, and render me worthy of it, by applying to my soul the merits of the Blood you shed, which I am going to receive.

Come then, dear Lord, but before you enter my Heart, forgive me all my offences. I wish I could by my present devotion and fervour supply for all my defects of former Communion; if you bestow it on me I shall; it is what I humbly beg. Grant, or receive (in lieu of what is wanting in me) those Sacred Dispositions with which you received yourself, and those with which your

X

Blessed

Blessed Mother, and all your servants,
have received you.

After Communion.

Adore Christ in your breast, with sentiments of a respectful fear, considering him as your Judge; and then reflecting that he is not less your Saviour, assuming a fresh confidence, say to him,

Is it not in you that you would have me place my whole confidence? I do, dear Lord, for I know your Divine Heart is mine, and for me; this assures me against all fears, and makes me hope that your Judgment will be, in my regard, a Judgment of love and mercy.

Blessed be the Father of Mercies for giving me my Redeemer for Judge, without which, what could I have hoped for! O turn your eyes from the evils I have done, and only look on what your Goodness has done for me. I acknowledge there is nothing in me which is not criminal, but there is not one of my sins for which you have not shed your Blood to wash away its stain. Permit me not to be lost, after having cost you so dear! my soul is in your hands,
which

which is all my consolation ; it is infinitely more secure than in my own ! by the Precious Blood you shed for it, grant it may never be separated from you.

I offer my life, and all I shall leave by dying, as a Sacrifice to you. Permit not death to seize on me so suddenly as to find me unprovided. Sanctify my death, and grant I may die humble, penitent, and perfectly submissive to your Will ; heartily pardoning all, and receiving pardon of all my offences ; fortified by your Grace, and Holy Sacraments, with due sentiments of gratitude. Such a death I ardently desire, grant it me as soon as you please ; and to obtain it, and a favourable sentence, I beg your grace that for the remainder of my life I may observe all you ordain me for that effect, which is, *If I judge not, I shall not be judged ; if I pardon all, I shall receive pardon of all my sins* ; this, dear Lord, I do with my whole heart.

O my Judge, but more Father than Judge ! if it depends but on my observing these articles to secure me your favour, and to remain for ever in it, behold me with your grace, ready to perform them ; one favour I beg, which is

X 2

that

that you will tarry with me, my dear Saviour, because my days are almost spent, and this visible sun will soon set to me : O ! bring me to the place where you yourself are the Eternal Lamp.

Leave me not till I breathe forth my Soul, which I now recommend into your Sacred Hands, that it may remain for ever with you. Amen.

Answers to the Objections against frequent Communions. Out of St. Francis of Sales.

If wordlings ask you (says the Saint) why you communicate so often ? tell them you do it to learn to love God ; to be purified from your imperfections, to be comforted in your afflictions, and to find rest, repose, and ease in your weaknesses. Tell them that two sorts of persons should communicate very often ; the *Perfect*, because being well disposed, they would wrong themselves did they not approach to the very source of Perfection ; and the *Imperfect*, that they may aspire to Perfection ; the Strong, lest they become weak ; and the Weak, to become strong ; the Sick to be cured, and the Healthy to be preserved from sickness.

ness. Tell them that for your own part, as one very imperfect, weak, and sick, you have great need to communicate often with him, who is your only Perfection, Strength, and Health. Tell them that those who have not many worldly affairs should communicate often, because they have good leisure; and those who have many temporal occupations should likewise do so, because they stand in need of it; and that he that labours much, must eat often, and strengthen himself with hearty food. Tell them that you receive the Blessed Sacrament to learn to receive it well; for no man can do an action well which he has not often practised; therefore communicate as often as you can with Counsel and Advice of your Ghostly Father.

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A PRAYER.

A P R A Y E R

FOR OUR KING AND COUNTRY.

MOST adorable Lord JESUS CHRIST, Saviour of the World, *God of Hosts, and Prince of Peace*, look down with eyes of compassion upon our manifold miseries: we confess our heinous transgressions; we turn to you with contrite hearts; to you, O God! our *Refuge and Defence: Remember not, O Lord! our or our Parents Offences, nor take vengeance of our sins*: regard us, as you are our Pastor, as the sheep of your flock, and as the poor remains of your ancient sheepfold in England: *Be mindful of your congregation, which you have possessed from the beginning*: O JESUS, be to us a JESUS; be to us a *Saviour*; hear, O God, our Prayer; let our cry come unto you: we believe in you; we call upon your Holy Name; let us not be confounded; spare us, O Lord! spare your People, lest your enemies may say, *Where is their God? your Altars are polluted; your inheritance destroyed; but you, O my Lord, how long?*

Inspire,

P R A Y E R.

Inspire, O JESUS, with your Holy Grace; endue with your Holy Spirit the Missioners of our nation consecrated to your service; renew in them the wisdom, zeal, and piety of their Predecessors; purify their lives, second their words, and sanctify their mystery, that in and by you the good may be confirmed; the wandering may be reclaimed; and the spotless Religion formerly planted, may once more revive and blossom in our Land.

Shower down your blessings, O bountiful God, upon your anointed *our SOVEREIGN King George, and all the Royal Family*. And as you have mercifully pleased to call them to the unity of your Faith and bosom of your Church; let them see that you are *their Safeguard*; grant them Constancy, grant them Fidelity to your Divine Graces, and grant them perseverance in your Love and Service: direct them in their Councils; strengthen them in their Enterprizes; and render them victorious over all their Enemies; re establish them in their Kingdoms, and give them many years to enjoy the same. This we beg by the Passion and Merits of JESUS CHRIST your only Son, who lives and reigns with you in union of the Holy Ghost for ever and ever. *Amen.*

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m. G

MAY 11 1944

